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THE PROSE WORKS
OF
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

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THE PROSE WORKS
OF
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

FOR THE FIRST TIME COLLECTED,
WITH ADDITIONS FROM UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS.

Edited, with Preface, Notes and Illustrations,

BY THE
REV. ALEXANDER B. GROSART,
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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.
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CRITICAL AND ETHICAL.

I. NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE POEMS;

INCORPORATING

- (a) THE NOTES ORIGINALLY ADDED TO THE FIRST AND SUCCESSIVE EDITIONS.
- (b) THE WHOLE OF THE I. F. MSS.

NOTE.

On these Notes and Illustrations, their sources and arrangement, &c., see our Preface, Vol. I. The star [*] marks those that belong to the I. F. mss. G.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE POEMS.

1. * *Prefatory Lines.*

‘If thou indeed derive thy light from Heaven,
Then to the measure of that heaven-born light,
Shine, Poet, in thy place, and be content:’—

‘**L**IKE an unintended watch-fire,’ &c. (l. 10) : These Verses were written some time after we had become resident at Rydal Mount ; and I will take occasion from them to observe upon the beauty of that situation, as being backed and flanked by lofty fells, which bring the heavenly bodies to touch, as it were, the earth upon the mountain-tops, while the prospect in front lies open to a length of level valley, the extended lake, and a terminating ridge of low hills ; so that it gives an opportunity to the inhabitants of the place of noticing the stars in both the positions here alluded to, namely, on the tops of the mountains, and as winter-lamps at a distance among the leafless trees.

2. * *Prelude to the Last Volume.* [As supra.]

These Verses were begun while I was on a visit to my son John at Brigham, and finished at Rydal. As the contents of this Volume to which they are now prefixed will be assigned to their respective classes when my Poems shall be collected in one Vol., I should be at a loss where with propriety to place this Prelude, being too restricted in its bearing to serve as a Preface for the whole. The lines towards the conclusion allude to the discontents then fomented thro’ the country by the Agitators of the Anti - Corn - Law League : the particular causes of such troubles are transitory, but disposition to excite and liability to be excited, are nevertheless permanent and therefore proper objects of the Poet’s regard.

I. POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH.

3. * *Extract from the Conclusion of a Poem, composed in anticipation of leaving School. [I.]*

‘Dear native regions,’ &c. 1786. Hawkshead. The beautiful image with which this poem concludes suggested itself to me while I was resting in a boat along with my companions under the shade of a magnificent row of sycamores, which then extended their branches from the shore of the promontory upon which stands the ancient and at that time the more picturesque Hall of Coniston, the Seat of the Le Flemings from very early times. The Poem of which it was the conclusion was of many hundred lines, and contained thoughts and images most of which have been dispersed through my other writings.

4. Of the Poems in this class, ‘The Evening Walk’ and ‘Descriptive Sketches’ were first published in 1793. They are reprinted with some alterations that were chiefly made very soon after their publication.

.

This notice, which was written some time ago, scarcely applies to the Poem, ‘Descriptive Sketches,’ as it now stands. The corrections, though numerous, are not, however, such as to prevent its retaining with propriety a place in the class of Juvenile Pieces.

5. * *An Evening Walk. Addressed to a Young Lady. [III.]*

The young lady to whom this was addressed was my sister. It was composed at School and during my first two college vacations. There is not an image in it which I have not observed; and, now in my seventy-third year, I recollect the time and place where most of them were noticed. I will confine myself to one instance.

‘Waving his hat, the shepherd from the vale
Directs his wandering dog the cliffs to scale;
The dog bounds barking mid the glittering rocks,
Hunts where his master points, the intercepted flocks.’

I was an eye-witness of this for the first time while crossing the pass of Dunmail Raise. Upon second thought, I will mention another image:

'And fronting the bright west, yon oak entwines
Its darkening boughs and leaves in stronger lines.'

This is feebly and imperfectly exprest ; but I recollect distinctly the very spot where this first struck me. It was on the way between Hawkshead and Ambleside, and gave me extreme pleasure. The moment was important in my poetical history ; for I date from it my consciousness of the infinite variety of natural appearances which had been unnoticed by the poets of any age or country, so far as I was acquainted with them ; and I made a resolution to supply in some degree the deficiency. I could not have been at that time above fourteen years of age. The description of the swans that follows, was taken from the daily opportunities I had of observing their habits, not as confined to the gentleman's park, but in a state of nature. There were two pairs of them that divided the lake of Esthwaite and its in-and-out-flowing streams between them, never trespassing a single yard upon each other's separate domain. They were of the old magnificent species, bearing in beauty and majesty about the same relation to the Thames swan which that does to a goose. It was from the remembrance of these noble creatures I took, thirty years after, the picture of the swan which I have discarded from the poem of 'Dion.' While I was a school-boy, the late Mr. Curwen introduced a little fleet of these birds, but of the inferior species, to the Lake of Windermere. Their principal home was about his own islands ; but they sailed about into remote parts of the lake, and either from real or imagined injury done to the adjoining fields, they were got rid of at the request of the farmers and proprietors, but to the great regret of all who had become attached to them from noticing their beauty and quiet habits. I will conclude my notice of this poem by observing that the plan of it has not been confined to a particular walk, or an individual place ; a proof (of which I was unconscious at the time) of my unwillingness to submit the poetic spirit to the chains of fact and real circumstance. The country is idealized rather than described in any one of its local aspects.

FOOT-NOTES.

5^a. *Intake* (l. 49).

'When horses in the sunburnt intake stood.'

The word *intake* is local, and signifies a mountain-enclosure.

6. *Ghyll* (l. 54).

‘Brightens with water-brooks the hollow ghyll.’

Ghyll is also, I believe, a term confined to this country; ghyll and dingle have the same meaning.

7. Line 191.

‘Gives one bright glance, and drops behind the hill.’

From Thomson.

8. * *Lines written while sailing in a Boat at Evening.* [iv.]

1789. This title is scarcely correct. It was during a solitary walk on the banks of the Cam that I was first struck with this appearance, and applied it to my own feelings in the manner here expressed, changing the scene to the Thames, near Windsor. This, and the three stanzas of the following poem, ‘Remembrance of Collins,’ formed one piece; but upon the recommendation of Coleridge, the three last stanzas were separated from the other.

9. *Descriptive Sketches taken during a Pedestrian Tour among the Alps.* [vi.]

DEDICATION.

TO THE REV. ROBERT JONES, FELLOW OF ST. JOHN’S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

DEAR SIR,—However desirous I might have been of giving you proofs of the high place you hold in my esteem, I should have been cautious of wounding your delicacy by thus publicly addressing you, had not the circumstance of our having been companions among the Alps seemed to give this dedication a propriety sufficient to do away any scruples which your modesty might otherwise have suggested.

In inscribing this little work to you, I consult my heart. You know well how great is the difference between two companions lolling in a post-chaise, and two travellers plodding slowly along the road, side by side, each with his little knapsack of necessaries upon his shoulders. How much more of heart between the two latter!

I am happy in being conscious that I shall have one reader

who will approach the conclusion of these few pages with regret. You they must certainly interest, in reminding you of moments to which you can hardly look back without a pleasure not the less dear from a shade of melancholy. You will meet with few images without recollecting the spot where we observed them together; consequently, whatever is feeble in my design, or spiritless in my colouring, will be amply supplied by your own memory.

With still greater propriety I might have inscribed to you a description of some of the features of your native mountains, through which we have wandered together, in the same manner, with so much pleasure. But the sea-sunsets, which give such splendour to the vale of Clwyd, Snowdon, the chair of Idris, the quiet village of Bethgelert, Menai and her Druids, the Alpine steeps of the Conway, and the still more interesting windings of the wizard stream of the Dee, remain yet untouched. Apprehensive that my pencil may never be exercised on these subjects, I cannot let slip this opportunity of thus publicly assuring you with how much affection and esteem

I am, dear Sir,

Most sincerely yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.

London, 1793.

10. * *Descriptive Sketches.*

1791-2. Much the greatest part of this poem was composed during my walks upon the banks of the Loire, in the years 1791, 1792. I will only notice that the description of the valley filled with mist, beginning ‘In solemn shapes,’ &c. was taken from that beautiful region, of which the principal features are Luggarn and Sarnen. Nothing that I ever saw in Nature left a more delightful impression on my mind than that which I have attempted, alas how feebly! to convey to others in these lines. Those two lakes have always interested me, especially from bearing, in their size and other features, a resemblance to those of the North of England. It is much to be deplored that a district so beautiful should be so unhealthy as it is.

FOOT-NOTES.**11. *The Cross.***

'The Cross, by angels planted on the aerial rock' (l. 70).

Alluding to the crosses seen on the spiry rocks of Chartreuse.

12. *Rivers.*

'Along the mystic streams of Life and Death' (l. 71).

Names of rivers at the Chartreuse.

13. *Vallombre.*

'Vallombre, 'mid her falling fanes' (l. 74).

Name of one of the valleys of the Chartreuse.

14. *Sugh.*

'Beneath the cliffs, and pine-wood's steady sugh' (l. 358).

Sugh, a Scotch word expressive of the sound of the wind through the trees.

15. *Pikes.*

'And Pikes of darkness named and fear and storms' (l. 471).

As Schreck-Horn, the pike of terror, Wetter-horn, the pike of storms, &c. &c.

16. *Shrine.*

'Ensiedlen's wretched fane' (l. 545).

This shrine is resorted to, from a hope of relief, by multitudes, from every corner of the Catholic world, labouring under mental or bodily afflictions.

17. *Sourd.*

'Sole sound, the Sourd prolongs his mournful cry!' (l. 618.)

An insect so called, which emits a short melancholy cry, heard at the close of the Summer evenings, on the banks of the Loire.

18. * Lines left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree, which stands near the Lake of Esthwaite, on a desolate Part of the Shore, commanding a beautiful Prospect. [VII.]

Composed in part at school at Hawkshead. The tree has disappeared, and the slip of Common on which it stood, that

ran parallel to the lake, and lay open to it, has long been enclosed, so that the road has lost much of its attraction. This spot was my favourite walk in the evenings during the latter part of my school-time. The individual whose habits and character are here given was a gentleman of the neighbourhood, a man of talent and learning, who had been educated at one of our universities, and returned to pass his time in seclusion on his own estate. He died a bachelor in middle age. Induced by the beauty of the prospect, he built a small summer-house on the rocks above the peninsula on which the ferry-house stands. [In pencil here—Query, Mr. Nott?]

This property afterwards past into the hands of the late Mr. Curwen. The site was long ago pointed out by Mr. West in his *Guide* as the pride of the Lakes, and now goes by the name of ‘The Station.’ So much used I to be delighted with the view from it, while a little boy, that some years before the first pleasure-house was built, I led thither from Hawkshead a youngster about my own age, an Irish boy, who was a servant to an itinerant conjuror. My motive was to witness the pleasure I expected the boy would receive from the prospect of the islands below, and the intermingling water. I was not disappointed; and I hope the fact, insignificant as it may seem to some, may be thought worthy of note by others who may cast their eye over these notes.

19. *Guilt and Sorrow; or Incidents upon Salisbury Plain.* [viii.]

ADVERTISEMENT, PREFIXED TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THIS POEM,
PUBLISHED IN 1842.

Not less than one-third of the following poem, though it has from time to time been altered in the expression, was published so far back as the year 1798, under the title of ‘The Female Vagrant.’ The extract is of such length that an apology seems to be required for reprinting it here: but it was necessary to restore it to its original position, or the rest would have been unintelligible. The whole was written before the close of the year 1794, and I will detail, rather as a matter of literary biography than for any other reason, the circumstances under which it was produced.

During the latter part of the summer of 1793, having passed a month in the Isle of Wight, in view of the fleet which was

then preparing for sea off Portsmouth at the commencement of the war, I left the place with melancholy forebodings. The American war was still fresh in memory. The struggle which was beginning, and which many thought would be brought to a speedy close by the irresistible arms of Great Britain being added to those of the Allies, I was assured in my own mind would be of long continuance, and productive of distress and misery beyond all possible calculation. This conviction was pressed upon me by having been a witness, during a long residence in revolutionary France, of the spirit which prevailed in that country. After leaving the Isle of Wight, I spent two days in wandering on foot over Salisbury Plain, which, though cultivation was then widely spread through parts of it, had upon the whole a still more impressive appearance than it now retains.

The monuments and traces of antiquity, scattered in abundance over that region, led me unavoidably to compare what we know or guess of those remote times with certain aspects of modern society, and with calamities, principally those consequent upon war, to which, more than other classes of men, the poor are subject. In those reflections, joined with particular facts that had come to my knowledge, the following stanzas originated.

In conclusion, to obviate some distraction in the minds of those who are well acquainted with Salisbury Plain, it may be proper to say, that of the features described as belonging to it, one or two are taken from other desolate parts of England.

*20. * The Female Vagrant.*

I find the date of this is placed in 1792 in contradiction, by mistake, to what I have asserted in ‘Guilt and Sorrow.’ The correct date is 1793-4. The chief incidents of it, more particularly her description of her feelings on the Atlantic, are taken from life.

*21. * Guilt and Sorrow ; or Incidents upon Salisbury Plain.*

[VIII.]

Unwilling to be unnecessarily particular, I have assigned this poem to the dates 1793 and 1794; but, in fact, much of

the Female Vagrant's story was composed at least two years before. All that relates to her sufferings as a soldier's wife in America, and her condition of mind during her voyage home, were faithfully taken from the report made to me of her own case by a friend who had been subjected to the same trials, and affected in the same way. Mr. Coleridge, when I first became acquainted with him, was so much impressed with this poem, that it would have encouraged me to publish the whole as it then stood; but the Mariner's fate appeared to me so tragical, as to require a treatment more subdued, and yet more strictly applicable in expression, than I had at first given to it. This fault was corrected nearly fifty years afterwards, when I determined to publish the whole. It may be worth while to remark, that though the incidents of this attempt do only in a small degree produce each other, and it deviates accordingly from the general rule by which narrative pieces ought to be governed, it is not therefore wanting in continuous hold upon the mind, or in unity, which is effected by the identity of moral interest that places the two personages upon the same footing in the reader's sympathies. My ramble over many parts of Salisbury Plain put me, as mentioned in the preface, upon writing this poem, and left upon my mind imaginative impressions the force of which I have felt to this day. From that district I proceeded to Bath, Bristol, and so on to the banks of the Wye; when I took again to travelling on foot. In remembrance of that part of my journey, which was in 1793, I began the verses,

‘Five years have passed,’ &c.

22. *Charles Farish.*

‘And hovering, round it often did a raven fly.’

From a short ms. poem read to me when an undergraduate, by my schoolfellow and friend, Charles Farish, long since deceased. The verses were by a brother of his, a man of promising genius, who died young. [‘Guilt and Sorrow,’ st. ix. l. 9.]

23. * *The Forsaken. Poems founded on the Affections.* [xii.]

This was an overflow from the affliction of Margaret, and excluded as superfluous there; but preserved in the faint hope that it may turn to account, by restoring a shy lover to some

forsaken damsel; my poetry having been complained of as deficient in interests of this sort, a charge which the next piece, beginning,

‘Lyre! though such power do in thy magic live!’

will scarcely tend to obviate. The natural imagery of these verses was supplied by frequent, I might say intense, observation of the Rydal Torrent. What an animating contrast is the ever-changing aspect of that, and indeed of every one of our mountain brooks, to the monotonous tone and unmitigated fury of such streams among the Alps as are fed all the summer long by glaciers and melting snows! A traveller, observing the exquisite purity of the great rivers, such as the Rhone at Geneva, and the Reuss at Lucerne, where they issue out of their respective lakes, might fancy for a moment that some power in Nature produced this beautiful change, with a view to make amends for those Alpine sullyings which the waters exhibit near their fountain heads; but, alas! how soon does that purity depart, before the influx of tributary waters that have flowed through cultivated plains and the crowded abodes of men.

24. * *The Borderers: a Tragedy.*

Of this dramatic work I have little to say in addition to the short printed note which will be found attached to it. It was composed at Racedown in Dorset, during the latter part of the year 1795, and in the course of the following year. Had it been the work of a later period of life, it would have been different in some respects from what it is now. The plot would have been something more complex, and a greater variety of characters introduced, to relieve the mind from the pressure of incidents so mournful; the manners also would have been more attended to. My care was almost exclusively given to the passions and the characters, and the position in which the persons in the drama stood relatively to each other, that the reader (for I never thought of the stage at the time it was written) might be moved, and to a degree instructed, by lights penetrating somewhat into the depths of our nature. In this endeavour, I cannot think, upon a very late review, that I have failed. As to the scene and period of action, little more was required for my purpose than the absence of established law and govern-

ment, so that the agents might be at liberty to act on their own impulses. Nevertheless, I do remember, that having a wish to colour the manners in some degree from local history more than my knowledge enabled me to do, I read Redpath's *History of the Borders*, but found there nothing to my purpose. I once made an observation to Sir W. Scott, in which he concurred, that it was difficult to conceive how so dull a book could be written on such a subject. Much about the same time, but a little after, Coleridge was employed in writing his tragedy of *Remorse*; and it happened soon after that, through one of the Mr. Poole's, Mr. Knight, the actor, heard that we had been engaged in writing plays, and, upon his suggestion, mine was curtailed, and (I believe, with Coleridge's) was offered to Mr. Harris, manager of Covent Garden. For myself, I had no hope, nor even a wish (though a successful play would in the then state of my finances have been a most welcome piece of good fortune), that he should accept my performance; so that I incurred no disappointment when the piece was *judiciously* returned as not calculated for the stage. In this judgment I entirely concurred; and had it been otherwise, it was so natural for me to shrink from public notice, that any hope I might have had of success would not have reconciled me altogether to such an exhibition. Mr. C.'s play was, as is well known, brought forward several years after, through the kindness of Mr. Sheridan. In conclusion, I may observe, that while I was composing this play, I wrote a short essay, illustrative of that constitution and those tendencies of human nature, which make the apparently *motiveless* actions of bad men intelligible to careful observers. This was partly done with reference to the character of Oswald, and his persevering endeavour to lead the man he disliked into so heinous a crime; but still more to preserve in my distinct remembrance what I had observed of transitions in character, and the reflections I had been led to make, during the time I was a witness of the changes through which the French Revolution passed.

25. The following is the 'short printed note' mentioned in above :

This Dramatic Piece, as noticed in its title-page, was composed in 1795-6. It lay nearly from that time till within the

last two or three months unregarded among my papers, without being mentioned even to my most intimate friends. Having, however, impressions upon my mind which made me unwilling to destroy the ms., I determined to undertake the responsibility of publishing it during my own life, rather than impose upon my successors the task of deciding its fate. Accordingly it has been revised with some care; but, as it was at first written, and is now published, without any view to its exhibition upon the stage, not the slightest alteration has been made in the conduct of the story, or the composition of the characters; above all, in respect to the two leading Persons of the Drama, I felt no inducement to make any change. The study of human nature suggests this awful truth, that, as in the trial to which life subjects us, sin and crime are apt to start from their very opposite qualities, so are there no limits to the hardening of the heart, and the perversion of the understanding to which they may carry their slaves. During my long residence in France, while the Revolution was rapidly advancing to its extreme of wickedness, I had frequent opportunities of being an eye-witness of this process, and it was while that knowledge was fresh upon my memory that the Tragedy of the *Borderers* was composed.

26. Later, this was prefixed: ‘Readers already acquainted with my Poems will recognise, in the following composition, some eight or ten lines which I have not scrupled to retain in the places where they originally stood. It is proper, however, to add, that they would not have been used elsewhere, if I had foreseen the time when I might be induced to publish this Tragedy. February 28. 1842.’

II. POEMS REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF CHILDHOOD.

27. * *My Heart leaps up when I behold.* [I.]

This was written at Grasmere, Town-End, 1804.

28. * *To a Butterfly.* [II.]

Grasmere, Town-End. Written in the Orchard, 1801. My sister and I were parted immediately after the death of our

mother, who died in 1777, both being very young. [Corrected in pencil on opposite page—‘March 1778.’]

29. * *The Sparrow’s Nest.* [III.]

The Orchard, Grasmere, Town-End, 1801. At the end of the garden of my Father’s house at Cockermouth was a high terrace that commanded a fine view of the river Derwent and Cockermouth Castle. This was our favourite play-ground. The terrace wall, a low one, was covered with closely-clipt privet and roses, which gave an almost impervious shelter to birds that built their nests there. The latter of these stanzas alludes to one of these nests.

30. * *Foresight.* [IV.]

Also composed in the Orchard, Grasmere, Town-End.

31. * *Characteristics of a Child three Years old.* [V.]

Picture of my daughter Catharine, who died the year after. Written at Allan-Bank, Grasmere, 1811.

32. * *Address to a Child.* [VI.]

During a boisterous Winter’s Evening. Town-End, Grasmere, 1806.

33. * *The Mother’s Return.* [VII.]

Ditto. By Miss Wordsworth [*i.e.* both poems].

34. * *Alice Fell; or Poverty.* [VIII.]

1801. Written to gratify Mr. Graham, of Glasgow, brother of the Author of ‘The Sabbath.’ He was a zealous coadjutor of Mr. Clarkson, and a man of ardent humanity. The incident had happened to himself, and he urged me to put it into verse for humanity’s sake. The humbleness, meanness if you like, of the subject, together with the homely mode of treating it, brought upon me a world of ridicule by the small critics, so that in policy I excluded it from many editions of my Poems, till it was restored at the request of some of my friends, in particular my son-in-law, Edward Quillinan.

35. * *Lucy Gray; or Solitude.* [IX.]

Written at Goslar, in Germany, in 1799. It was founded

on a circumstance told me by my sister, of a little girl, who, not far from Halifax, in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snow-storm. Her footsteps were tracked by her parents to the middle of the lock of a canal, and no other vestige of her, backward or forward, could be traced. The body, however, was found in the canal. The way in which the incident was treated, and the spiritualising of the character, might furnish hints for contrasting the imaginative influences, which I have endeavoured to throw over common life, with Crabbe's matter-of-fact style of handling subjects of the same kind. This is not spoken to his disparagement, far from it; but to direct the attention of thoughtful readers into whose hands these notes may fall, to a comparison that may enlarge the circle of their sensibilities, and tend to produce in them a catholic judgment.

36. * *We are Seven.* [x.] *The Ancient Mariner and Coleridge, &c. &c.*

Written at Alfoxden in the spring of 1798, under circumstances somewhat remarkable. The little girl who is the heroine, I met within the area of Goderich Castle in the year 1793. Having left the Isle of Wight, and crost Salisbury Plain, as mentioned in the preface to 'Guilt and Sorrow,' I proceeded by Bristol up the Wye, and so on to N. Wales to the Vale of Clwydd, where I spent my summer under the roof of the father of my friend, Robert Jones.

In reference to this poem, I will here mention one of the most remarkable facts in my own poetic history, and that of Mr. Coleridge. In the spring of the year 1798, he, my sister, and myself, started from Alfoxden pretty late in the afternoon, with a view to visit Linton, and the Valley of Stones near to it; and as our united funds were very small, we agreed to defray the expense of the tour by writing a poem, to be sent to the *New Monthly Magazine*, set up by Phillips, the bookseller, and edited by Dr. Aikin. Accordingly we set off, and proceeded, along the Quantock Hills, towards Watchet; and in the course of this walk was planned the poem of the 'Ancient Mariner,' founded on a dream, as Mr. Coleridge said, of his friend Mr. Cruikshank. Much the greatest part of the story was Mr. Coleridge's invention; but certain parts I myself suggested; for example, some crime was to be committed which would bring upon the Old Navigator, as Coleridge afterwards delighted to call him, the

spectral persecution, as a consequence of that crime and his own wanderings. I had been reading in Shelvocke's *Voyages*, a day or two before, that, while doubling Cape Horn, they frequently saw albatrosses in that latitude, the largest sort of sea-fowl, some extending their wings twelve or thirteen feet. 'Suppose,' said I, 'you represent him as having killed one of these birds on entering the South Sea, and that the tutelary spirits of these regions take upon them to avenge the crime.' The incident was thought fit for the purpose, and adopted accordingly. I also suggested the navigation of the ship by the dead men, but do not recollect that I had anything more to do with the scheme of the poem. The gloss with which it was subsequently accompanied was not thought of by either of us at the time, at least not a hint of it was given to me, and I have no doubt it was a gratuitous after-thought. We began the composition together, on that to me memorable evening: I furnished two or three lines at the beginning of the poem, in particular—

‘And listen'd like a three years' child;
The Mariner had his will.’

These trifling contributions, all but one, (which Mr. C. has with unnecessary scrupulosity recorded,) slipt out of his mind, as they well might. As we endeavoured to proceed conjointly (I speak of the same evening), our respective manners proved so widely different, that it would have been quite presumptuous in me to do anything but separate from an undertaking upon which I could only have been a clog. We returned after a few days from a delightful tour, of which I have many pleasant, and some of them droll enough, recollections. We returned by Dulverton to Alfoxden. The ‘Ancient Mariner’ grew and grew till it became too important for our first object, which was limited to our expectation of five pounds; and we began to talk of a volume which was to consist, as Mr. Coleridge has told the world, of Poems chiefly on natural subjects, taken from common life, but looked at, as much as might be, through an imaginative medium. Accordingly I wrote ‘The Idiot Boy,’ ‘Her Eyes are wild,’ &c., and ‘We are Seven,’ ‘The Thorn,’ and some others. To return to ‘We are Seven,’ the piece that called forth this note:—I composed it while walking in the grove of Alfoxden. My friends will not deem it too trifling to relate, that while walking to and fro I composed the last stanza first, having begun with the last

line. When it was all but finished, I came in and recited it to Mr. Coleridge and my sister, and said, ‘A prefatory stanza must be added, and I should sit down to our little tea-meal with greater pleasure if my task was finished.’ I mentioned in substance what I wished to be expressed, and Coleridge immediately threw off the stanza, thus :

‘ A little child, dear brother Jem.’

I objected to the rhyme, ‘dear brother Jem,’ as being ludicrous ; but we all enjoyed the joke of hitching in our friend James Tobin’s name, who was familiarly called Jem. He was the brother of the dramatist ; and this reminds me of an anecdote which it may be worth while here to notice. The said Jem got a sight of the ‘Lyrical Ballads’ as it was going through the press at Bristol, during which time I was residing in that city. One evening he came to me with a grave face, and said, ‘Words-worth, I have seen the volume that Coleridge and you are about to publish. There is one poem in it which I earnestly entreat you will cancel, for, if published, it will make you everlastingily ridiculous.’ I answered, that I felt much obliged by the interest he took in my good name as a writer, and begged to know what was the unfortunate piece he alluded to. He said, ‘It is called “We are Seven.”’ ‘Nay,’ said I, ‘that shall take its chance, however ;’ and he left me in despair. I have only to add, that in the spring of 1841, I visited Goodrich Castle, not having seen that part of the Wye since I met the little girl there in 1793. It would have given me greater pleasure to have found in the neighbouring hamlet traces of one who had interested me so much, but that was impossible, as, unfortunately, I did not even know her name. The ruin, from its position and features, is a most impressive object. I could not but deeply regret that its solemnity was impaired by a fantastic new castle set up on a projection of the same ridge, as if to show how far modern art can go in surpassing all that could be done by antiquity and Nature with their united graces, remembrances, and associations. I could have almost wished for power, so much the contrast vexed me, to blow away Sir —— Meyrick’s impertinent structure and all the possessions it contains.

37. * *The Idle Shepherd Boys; or Dungeon-Ghyll Force : a Pastoral.* [xi.]

Grasmere, Town-End, 1800. I will only add a little monitory anecdote concerning this subject. When Coleridge and Southey were walking together upon the Fells, Southey observed that, if I wished to be considered a faithful painter of rural manners, I ought not to have said that my shepherd boys trimmed their rustic hats as described in the poem. Just as the words had past his lips, two boys appeared with the very plant entwined round their hats. I have often wondered that Southey, who rambled so much about the mountains, should have fallen into this mistake ; and I record it as a warning for others who, with far less opportunity than my dear friend had of knowing what things are, and with far less sagacity, give way to presumptuous criticism, from which he was free, though in this matter mistaken. In describing a tarn under Helvellyn, I say,

‘There sometimes doth a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer.’

This was branded by a critic of those days, in a review ascribed to Mrs. Barbauld, as unnatural and absurd. I admire the genius of Mrs. Barbauld, and am certain that, had her education been favourable to imaginative influences, no female of her day would have been more likely to sympathise with that image, and to acknowledge the truth of the sentiment.

38. *Foot-note.*

Heading : ‘Dungeon-ghyll Force.’ *Ghyll*, in the dialect of Cumberland and Westmoreland, is a short and, for the most part, a steep narrow valley, with a stream running through it. *Force* is the word universally employed in these dialects for waterfall.

39. * *Anecdote for Fathers.* [xii.]

This was suggested in front of Alfoxden. The boy was a son of my friend Basil Montagu, who had been two or three years under our care. The name of Kilve is from a village in the Bristol Channel, about a mile from Alfoxden ; and the name of Liswin Farm was taken from a beautiful spot on the Wye. When Mr. Coleridge, my sister, and I had been visiting the

famous John Thelwall, who had taken refuge from politics, after a trial for high treason, with a view to bring up his family by the profits of agriculture; which proved as unfortunate a speculation as that he had fled from. Coleridge and he had been public lecturers: Coleridge mingling with his politics theology; from which the other abstained, unless it were for the sake of a sneer. This quondam community of public employment induced Thelwall to visit Coleridge at Nether Stowey, where he fell in my way. He really was a man of extraordinary talent, an affectionate husband, and a good father. Though brought up in the city on a tailor's board, he was truly sensible of the beauty of natural objects. I remember once when Coleridge, he and I were seated together upon the turf, on the brink of a stream in the most beautiful part of the most beautiful glen of Alfoxden, Coleridge exclaimed, 'This is a place to reconcile one to all the jarrings and conflicts of the wide world.' 'Nay,' said Thelwall, 'to make one forget them altogether.' The visit of this man to Coleridge was, as I believe Coleridge has related, the occasion of a spy being sent by Government to watch our proceedings; which were, I can say with truth, such as the world at large would have thought ludicrously harmless.

40. *Rural Architecture.* [xiii.]

These structures, as every one knows, are common among our hills, being built by shepherds, as conspicuous marks, and occasionally by boys in sport. It was written at Town-End, in 1801.

41. *Foot-note: Great How* (l. 4).

Great How is a single and conspicuous hill, which rises towards the foot of Thirlmere, on the western side of the beautiful dale of Legberthwaite.

42. * *The Pet Lamb: a Pastoral.* [xiv.]

Town-End, 1800. Barbara Lewthwaite, now living at Ambleside (1843), though much changed as to beauty, was one of two most lovely sisters. Almost the first words my poor brother John said, when he visited us for the first time at Grasmere, were, 'Were those two angels that I have just seen?' and from

his description I have no doubt they were those two sisters. The mother died in childbed ; and one of our neighbours, at Grasmere, told me that the loveliest sight she had ever seen was that mother as she lay in her coffin with her [dead] babe in her arm. I mention this to notice what I cannot but think a salutary custom, once universal in these vales : every attendant on a funeral made it a duty to look at the corpse in the coffin before the lid was closed, which was never done (nor I believe is now) till a minute or two before the corpse was removed. Barbara Lewthwaite was not, in fact, the child whom I had seen and overheard as engaged in the poem. I chose the name for reasons implied in the above, and will here add a caution against the use of names of living persons. Within a few months after the publication of this poem, I was much surprised, and more hurt, to find it in a child's school-book, which, having been compiled by Lindley Murray, had come into use at Grasmere school, where Barbara was a pupil. And, alas, I had the mortification of hearing that she was very vain of being thus distinguished ; and in after life she used to say that she remembered the incident, and what I said to her upon the occasion.

43. * *Influence of Natural Objects, &c.* [xvi.]

Written in Germany, 1799.

44. * *The Longest Day.* [xvii.]

1817. Suggested by the sight of my daughter (Dora) playing in front of Rydal Mount, and composed in a great measure the same afternoon. I have often wished to pair this poem upon the 'longest' with one upon the 'shortest' day, and regret even now that it has not been done.

45. * *The Norman Boy.* [xviii.]

The subject of this poem was sent me by Mrs. Ogle, to whom I was personally unknown, with a hope on her part that I might be induced to relate the incident in verse. And I do not regret that I took the trouble ; for not improbably the fact is illustrative of the boy's early piety, and may concur, with my other little pieces on children, to produce profitable reflection among

my youthful readers. This is said, however, with an absolute conviction that children will derive most benefit from books which are not unworthy the perusal of persons of any age. I protest with my whole heart against those productions, so abundant in the present day, in which the doings of children are dwelt upon as if they were incapable of being interested in anything else. On this subject I have dwelt at length in the Poem on the growth of my own mind. ['Prelude.']}

III. POEMS FOUNDED ON THE AFFECTIONS.

46. *The Brothers.* [I.]

1800. This poem was composed in a grove at the north-eastern end of Grasmere Lake, which grove was in a great measure destroyed by turning the high-road along the side of the water. The few trees that are left were spared at my intercession. The poem arose out of the fact mentioned to me, at Ennerdale, that a shepherd had fallen asleep upon the top of the rock called the 'pillar,' and perished as here described, his staff being left midway on the rock.

47. *Great Gavel.* (Foot-note.)

'From the Great Gavel down by Leeza's banks' (l. 324).

The Great Gavel, so called, I imagine, from its resemblance to the gable end of a house, is one of the highest of the Cumberland mountains. The Leeza is a river which flows into the Lake of Ennerdale.

48. *Artegal and Elidure.* [II.]

Rydal Mount. This was written in the year 1815, as a token of affectionate respect for the memory of Milton. 'I have determined,' says he, in his preface to his History of England, 'to bestow the telling over even of these reputed tales, be it for nothing else but in favour of our English Poets and Rhetoricians, who by their wit well know how to use them judiciously.' See the Chronicle of Geoffrey of Monmouth and Milton's History of England.

49. * *To a Butterfly.* [III.]

1801. Written at the same time and place.

50. * *A Farewell.* [IV.]

1802. Composed just before my sister and I went to fetch Mary from Gallowhill, near Scarborough.

51. * *Stanzas written in my Pocket-copy of Thomson's 'Castle of Indolence.'* [V.]

Composed in the Orchard, Grasmere, Town-End. Coleridge living with us much at the time, his son Hartley has said that his father's character and history are here preserved in a livelier way than in anything that has been written about him.

52. * *Louisa. After accompanying her on a mountain Excursion.* [VI.]

Town-End, 1805.

53.* *Strange Fits of Passion have I known.* [VII.]

* *She dwelt among the Springs of Dove.* [VIII.]

* *I travelled among unknown Men.* [IX.]

These three poems were written in Germany, 1799.

54. * *Ere with cold Beads of midnight Dew.* [X.]

Rydal Mount, 1826. Suggested by the condition of a friend.

55. * *To ——.* [XI.]

Rydal Mount, 1824. Prompted by the undue importance attached to personal beauty by some dear friends of mine. [In opposite page in pencil—S. C.]

56. * *'Tis said that some have died for Love.* [XIII.]

1800.

57. * *A Complaint.* [XIV.]

Suggested by a change in the manners of a friend. Coleorton, 1806. [Town-End marked out and Coleorton written in pencil; and on opposite page in pencil—Coleridge, S. T.]

58. * *To ——.* [xv.]

Rydal Mount, 1824. Written on [Mrs.] Mary Wordsworth.

59. * ‘*How rich that Forehead’s calm Expanse!*’ [xvii.]

Rydal Mount, 1824. Also on M. W.

60. * *To ——.* [xix.]

Rydal Mount, 1824. To M. W., Rydal Mount.

61. * *Lament of Mary Queen of Scots.* [xx.]

This arose out of a flash of Moonlight that struck the ground when I was approaching the steps that lead from the garden at Rydal Mount to the front of the house. ‘From her sunk eye a stagnant tear stole forth,’ is taken, with some loss, from a discarded poem, ‘The Convict,’ in which occurred, when he was discovered lying in the cell, these lines :

‘ But now he upraises the deep-sunken eye ;
The motion unsettles a tear ;
The silence of sorrow it seems to supply,
And asks of me, why I am here.’

62. *The Complaint of a forsaken Indian Woman.* [xxi.]

When a Northern Indian, from sickness, is unable to continue his journey with his companions, he is left behind, covered over with deer-skins, and is supplied with water, food, and fuel, if the situation of the place will afford it. He is informed of the track which his companions intend to pursue, and if he be unable to follow, or overtake them, he perishes alone in the desert; unless he should have the good fortune to fall in with some other tribes of Indians. The females are equally, or still more, exposed to the same fate. See that very interesting work, Hearne’s *Journey from Hudson’s Bay to the Northern Ocean*. In the high northern latitudes, as the same writer informs us, when the northern lights vary their position in the air, they make a rustling and a crackling noise, as alluded to in the following poem.

63. * *Ibid.*

At Alfoxden, in 1798, where I read Hearne's *Journey* with great interest. It was composed for the volume of 'Lyrical Ballads.'

64. * *The Last of the Flock.* [xxii.]

Produced at the same time [as 'The Complaint,' No. 62] and for the same purpose. The incident occurred in the village of Holford, close by Alfoxden.

65. * *Repentance.* [xxiii.]

Town-End, 1804. Suggested by the conversation of our next neighbour, Margaret Ashburner.

66. * *The Affliction of Margaret ——.* [xxiv.]

Town-End, 1804. This was taken from the case of a poor widow who lived in the town of Penrith. Her sorrow was well known to Mary, to my sister, and I believe to the whole town. She kept a shop, and when she saw a stranger passing by, she was in the habit of going out into the street to inquire of him after her son.

67. * *The Cottager to her Infant.* [xxv.]

By my sister. Suggested to her while beside my sleeping children.

68. * *Maternal Grief.*

This was in part an overflow from the Solitary's description of his own and his wife's feelings upon the decease of their children; and I will venture to add, for private notice solely, is faithfully set forth from my wife's feelings and habits after the loss of our two children, within half a year of each other.

69. * *The Sailor's Mother.* [xxvii.]

Town-End, 1800. I met this woman near the Wishing-Gate, on the high-road that then led from Grasmere to Ambleside. Her appearance was exactly as here described, and such was her account, nearly to the letter.

70. * *The Childless Father.* [xxviii.]

Town-End, 1800. When I was a child at Cockermouth, no funeral took place without a basin filled with sprigs of boxwood being placed upon a table covered with a white cloth in front of the house. The huntings (on foot) which the Old Man is suffered to join as here described were of common, almost habitual, occurrence in our vales when I was a boy ; and the people took much delight in them. They are now less frequent.

71. *Funeral Basin.*

'Filled the funeral basin at Timothy's door.'

In several parts of the North of England, when a funeral takes place, a basin full of sprigs of boxwood is placed at the door of the house from which the coffin is taken up, and each person who attends the funeral ordinarily takes a sprig of this boxwood, and throws it into the grave of the deceased.

72. * *The Emigrant Mother.* [xxix.]

1802. Suggested by what I have noticed in more than one French fugitive during the time of the French Revolution. If I am not mistaken, the lines were composed at Stockburn when I was on a visit to Mary and her brothers.

73. *Vaudracour and Julia.* [xxx.]

The following tale was written as an Episode, in a work from which its length may perhaps exclude it. The facts are true ; no invention as to these has been exercised, as none was needed.

74. * *Ibid.*

Town-End, 1805. Faithfully narrated, though with the omission of many pathetic circumstances, from the mouth of a French lady, who had been an eye and ear-witness of all that was done and said. Many long years after I was told that Dupligné was then a monk in the Convent of La Trappe.

75. *The Idiot Boy.*

Alfoxden, 1798. The last stanza, 'The cocks did crow, and the sun did shine so cold,' was the foundation of the whole. The

words were reported to me by my dear friend Thomas Poole ; but I have since heard the same reported of other idiots. Let me add, that this long poem was composed in the groves of Alfoxden, almost extempore ; not a word, I believe, being corrected, though one stanza was omitted. I mention this in gratitude to those happy moments, for, in truth, I never wrote anything with so much glee.

76. * *Michael.* [xxxii.]

Town-End, 1807. Written about the same time as ‘The Brothers.’ The sheepfold on which so much of the poem turns, remains, or rather the ruins of it. The character and circumstances of Luke were taken from a family to whom had belonged, many years before, the house we lived in at Town-End, along with some fields and woodlands on the eastern shore of Grasmere. The name of the Evening Star was not in fact given to this house, but to another on the same side of the valley more to the north. [On opposite page in pencil—‘Greenhead Ghyll.’]

77. *Clipping.*

‘The Clipping Tree, a name which yet it bears’ (foot-note on l. 169).

Clipping is the word used in the North of England for shearing.

78. * *The Widow on Windermere Side.* [xxxiv.]

The facts recorded in this Poem were given me and the character of the person described by my highly esteemed friend the Rev. R. P. Graves, who has long officiated as Curate at Bowness, to the great benefit of the parish and neighbourhood. The individual was well known to him. She died before these Verses were composed. It is scarcely worth while to notice that the stanzas are written in the sonnet-form ; which was adopted when I thought the matter might be included in 28 lines.

79. *The Armenian Lady's Love.* [xxxiv.]

The subject of the following poem is from the ‘Orlandus’ of the author’s friend, Kenelm Henry Digby : and the liberty is taken of inscribing it to him as an acknowledgment, however unworthy, of pleasure and instruction derived from his numerous

and valuable writings, illustrative of the piety and chivalry of the olden time. * Rydal Mount, 1830.

80. *Percy's 'Reliques'* (foot-note on l. 2).

' You have heard " a Spanish Lady
How she wooed an English man."

See in Percy's *Reliques* that fine old ballad, 'The Spanish Lady's Love'; from which Poem the form of stanza, as suitable to dialogue, is adopted.

81. * *Loving and Liking.* [xxxv.]

By my Sister. Rydal Mount, 1832. It arose, I believe, out of a casual expression of one of Mr. Swinburne's children.

82. * *Farewell Lines.* [xxxvi.]

These Lines were designed as a farewell to Charles Lamb and his Sister, who had retired from the throngs of London to comparative solitude in the village of Enfield, Herts. [sic.]

83. (1) *The Redbreast.*

Lines 45-6.

' Of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John
Blessing the bed she lies upon.'

The words—

' Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John,
Bless the bed that I lie on,'

are part of a child's prayer still in general use through the northern counties.

84. * (2)

Rydal Mount, 1834. Our cats having been banished the house, it was soon frequented by Red-breasts. Two or three of them, when the window was open, would come in, particularly when Mary was breakfasting alone, and hop about the table picking up the crumbs. My Sister being then confined to her room by sickness, as, dear creature, she still is, had one that, without being caged, took up its abode with her, and at night used to perch upon a nail from which a picture had hung. It used to sing and fan her face with its wings in a manner that was very touching. [In pencil—But who was the pale-faced child ?]

85. * *Her Eyes are wild.* [xxxviii.]

Alfoxden, 1798. The subject was reported to me by a lady of Bristol, who had seen the poor creature.

IV. POEMS ON THE NAMING OF PLACES.

86. *Advertisement.*

By persons resident in the country and attached to rural objects, many places will be found unnamed or of unknown names, where little Incidents must have occurred, or feelings been experienced, which will have given to such places a private and peculiar interest. From a wish to give some sort of record to such Incidents, and renew the gratification of such feelings, Names have been given to Places by the Author and some of his Friends, and the following Poems written in consequence.

87. * *It was an April Morn, &c.* [I.]

Grasmere, 1800. This poem was suggested on the banks of the brook that runs through Easedale, which is, in some parts of its course, as wild and beautiful as brook can be. I have composed thousands of verses by the side of it.

88. * ‘*May call it Emma’s Dell*’ (l. 47).

[In pencil, with reference to the last line is this—Emma’s Dell—Who was Emma?]

89. * *To Joanna Hutchinson.* [II.]

Grasmere, 1800. The effect of her laugh is an extravagance; though the effect of the reverberation of voices in some parts of these mountains is very striking. There is, in ‘The Excursion,’ an allusion to the bleat of a lamb thus re-echoed and described, without any exaggeration, as I heard it on the side of Stickle Tarn, from the precipice that stretches on to Langdale Pikes.

90. *Inscriptions.*

In Cumberland and Westmoreland are several Inscriptions upon the native rock, which, from the wasting of time, and the

rudeness of the workmanship, have been mistaken for Runic. They are without doubt Roman. The Rotha mentioned in the poem is the River which, flowing through the lakes of Grasmere and Ryedale, falls into Wynandermere. On Helmcrag, that impressive single mountain at the head of the Vale of Grasmere, is a rock which from most points of view bears a striking resemblance to an old woman cowering. Close by this rock is one of those fissures or caverns which in the language of the country are called dungeons. Most of the mountains here mentioned immediately surround the Vale of Grasmere; of the others, some are at a considerable distance, but they belong to the same cluster.

91. * *There is an Eminence, &c.* [III.]

1800. It is not accurate that the eminence here alluded to could be seen from our orchard seat. It arises above the road by the side of Grasmere Lake, towards Keswick, and its name is Stone Arthur.

92. * ‘*A narrow Girdle of rough Stones and Crags.*’ [IV.]

‘——Point Rash Judgment’ (last line).

1800. The character of the eastern shore of Grasmere Lake is quite changed since these verses were written, by the public road being carried along its side. The friends spoken of were Coleridge and my sister, and the fact occurred strictly as recorded.

93. * *To Mary Hutchinson.* [V.]

Two years before our marriage. The pool alluded to is in Rydal Upper Park.

94. * *When to the Attractions, &c.* [VI.]

1805. The grove still exists; but the plantation has been walled in, and is not so accessible as when my brother John wore the path in the manner here described. The grove was a favourite haunt with us all while we lived at Town-End.

95. *Captain Wordsworth.*

‘When we, and others whom we love, shall meet
A second time, in Grasmere’s happy Vale’ (last lines).

This wish was not granted; the lamented Person not long

after perished by shipwreck, in discharge of his duty as Commander of the Honourable East India Company's Vessel, the Earl of Abergavenny.

V. POEMS OF THE FANCY.

96. * *A Morning Exercise.* [I.]

Rydal Mount, 1825. I could wish the last five stanzas of this to be read with the poem addressed to the Sky-lark. [No. 158.]

97. * *Birds.*

'A feathered task-master cries, "Work away!"
And, in thy iteration, "Whip Poor Will!"
Is heard the spirit of a toil-worn slave' (ll. 15-17).

See Waterton's *Wanderings in South America*.

98. * *A Flower-garden.* [II.]

Planned by my friend Lady Beaumont in connexion with the garden at Coleorton.

99. * *A Whirl-blast from behind the Hill.* [III.]

Observed in the holly grove at Alfoxden, where these verses were written in the spring of 1799. I had the pleasure of again seeing, with dear friends, this Grove in unimpaired beauty forty-one years after. [The 'dear friends' were Mrs. Wordsworth, Miss Fenwick, Mr. and Mrs. Quillinan, and Mr. William Wordsworth, May 13, 1841. *Memoirs*, i. 112.]

100. * *The Waterfall and the Eglantine.* [IV.]

Suggested nearer to Grasmere on the same mountain track. The eglantine remained many years afterwards, but is now gone. [In pencil on opposite page—Mr. W. shewed me the place 1848. E. Q.]

101. * *The Oak and the Broom: a Pastoral.* [V.]

1800. Suggested upon the mountain pathway that leads from Upper Rydal to Grasmere. The ponderous block of stone, which is mentioned in the poem, remains, I believe, to this day,

a good way up Nab-Scar. Broom grows under it, and in many places on the side of the precipice.

102. * *To a Sexton.* [vi.]

Written in Germany, 1799.

103. * *To the Daisy.* [vii.]

This Poem, and two others to the same flower, were written in the year 1802; which is mentioned, because in some of the ideas, though not in the manner in which those ideas are connected, and likewise even in some of the expressions, there is a resemblance to passages in a Poem (lately published) of Mr. [James] Montgomery's, entitled a 'Field Flower.' This being said, Mr. Montgomery will not think any apology due to him; but I cannot, however, help addressing him in the words of the Father of English Poets :

‘ Though it happe me to rehersin
That ye han in your freshe songes saied,
Forberith me, and beth not ill apaied,
Sith that ye se I doe it in the honour
Of Love, and eke in service of the Flour.’

1807. [Foot-note.] See, in Chaucer and the older Poets, the honours formerly paid to this flower.

104. * *To the same Flower.* [viii.]

‘ To the Daisy,’ ‘ To the same Flower,’ and ‘ The Green Linnet’—all composed at Town-End Orchard, where the bird was often seen as here described.

105. * *To the small Celandine.* [xi.]

Grasmere, Town-End. It is remarkable that this flower coming out so early in the spring as it does, and so bright and beautiful, and in such profusion, should not have been noticed earlier in English verse. What adds much to the interest that attends it, is its habit of shutting itself up and opening out according to the degree of light and temperature of the air. [In pencil on opposite page—Has not Chaucer noticed it?] [Foot-note.] Common Pilewort.

106. *The Seven Sisters.*

The story of this Poem is from the German of Frederica Brun.

107. * *The Redbreast chasing the Butterfly.* [xv.]

Observed as described in the then beautiful Orchard at Town-End.

108. * *Song for the Spinning-wheel.* [xvi.]

1806. The belief on which this is founded I have often heard expressed by an old neighbour of Grasmere.

109. * *Hint from the Mountains.* [xvii.]

Bunches of fern may often be seen wheeling about in the wind, as here described. The particular bunch that suggested these verses was noticed in the Pass of Dunmail-Raise. The verses were composed in 1817, but the application is for all times and places.

110. * *On seeing a Needle-case in the Form of a Harp.* [xviii.]

1827.

111. * *The Contrast : the Parrot and the Wren.*

This parrot belonged to Mrs. Luff while living at Fox-Ghyll. The wren was one that haunted for many years the Summer-house between the two terraces at Rydal Mount. [In pencil on opposite page—Addressed to Dora.]

112. * *The Danish Boy.* [xxii.]

Written in Germany, 1799. It was entirely a fancy; but intended as a prelude to a ballad poem never written.

113. * *Song for the Wandering Jew.* [xxiii.]

1800.

114. * *Stray Pleasures.* [xxiv.]

Suggested on the Thames by the sight of one of those floating mills that used to be seen there. This I noticed on the Surrey side, between Somerset House and Blackfriars Bridge. Charles Lamb was with me at the time; and I thought it remark-

able that I should have to point out to *him*, an idolatrous Londoner, a sight so interesting as the happy group dancing on the platform. Mills of this kind used to be, and perhaps still are, not uncommon on the Continent. I noticed several upon the river Saone in the year 1799; particularly near the town of Chalons, where my friend Jones and I halted a day when we crossed France, so far on foot. There we embarked and floated down to Lyons.

115. * *The Pilgrim's Dream; or the Star and the Glowworm.*

[xxv.]

I distinctly recollect the evening when these verses were suggested in 1818. It was on the road between Rydal and Grasmere, where glowworms abound. A star was shining above the ridge of Loughrigg Fell just opposite. I remember a block-head of a critic in some Review or other crying out against this piece. ‘What so monstrous,’ said he, ‘as to make a star talk to a glowworm !’ Poor fellow, we know well from this sage observation what the ‘primrose on the river’s brim was to him.’

Further—In writing to Coleridge he says: ‘I parted from M—— on Monday afternoon, about six o’clock, a little on this side Rushyford. Soon after I missed my road in the midst of the storm. . . . Between the beginning of Lord Darlington’s park at Raby, and two or three miles beyond Staindrop, I composed the poem on the opposite page [‘The Pilgrim’s Dream,’ &c.]. I reached Barnard Castle about half-past ten. Between eight and nine evening I reached Eusemere.’ [Memoirs, i. pp. 181-2.]

116. * *The Poet and the caged Turtle-dove.* [xxvi.]

Rydal Mount, 1830. This dove was one of a pair that had been given to my daughter by our excellent friend Miss Jewsbury, who went to India with her husband Mr. Fletcher, where she died of cholera. The dove survived its mate many years, and was killed, to our great sorrow, by a neighbour’s cat that got in at the window and dragged it partly out of the cage. These verses were composed extempore, to the letter, in the Terrace Summer-house before spoken of. It was the habit of the bird

to begin cooing and murmuring whenever it heard me making my verses. [In pencil on opposite page—Dora.]

117. * *A Wren's Nest.* [xxvii.]

In Dora's Field, 1833 : Rydal Mount. This nest was built as described, in a tree that grows near the pool in Dora's field next the Rydal Mount Garden.

118. * *Love lies bleeding.* [xxviii.]

It has been said that the English, though their country has produced so many great poets, is now the most unpoetical nation in Europe. It is probably true; for they have more temptation to become so than any other European people. Trade, commerce, and manufactures, physical science and mechanic arts, out of which so much wealth has arisen, have made our countrymen infinitely less sensible to movements of imagination and fancy than were our forefathers in their simple state of society. How touching and beautiful were in most instances the names they gave to our indigenous flowers, or any other they were familiarly acquainted with ! Every month for many years have we been importing plants and flowers from all quarters of the globe, many of which are spread through our gardens, and some, perhaps, likely to be met with on the few commons which we have left. Will their botanical names ever be displaced by plain English appellations which will bring them home to our hearts by connection with our joys and sorrows ? It can never be, unless society treads back her steps towards those simplicities which have been banished by the undue influence of towns spreading and spreading in every direction, so that city life with every generation takes more and more the lead of rural. Among the ancients, villages were reckoned the seats of barbarism. Refinement, for the most part false, increases the desire to accumulate wealth ; and, while theories of political economy are boastfully pleading for the practice, inhumanity pervades all our dealings in buying and selling. This selfishness wars against disinterested imagination in all directions, and, evils coming round in a circle, barbarism spreads in every quarter of our island. Oh, for the reign of justice ! and then

the humblest man among us would have more peace and dignity in and about him than the highest have now.

119. * *Rural Illusions.* [xxv.]

Rydal Mount, 1832. Observed a hundred times in the grounds at Rydal Mount.

120. * *The Kitten and the falling Leaves.* [xxxii.]

1805. Seen at Town-End, Grasmere. The elder bush has long since disappeared ; it hung over the wall near the cottage, and the kitten continued to leap up, catching the leaves as here described. The infant was Dora.

121. *The Waggoner.* [xxxiii.]

DEDICATION.

‘In Cairo’s crowded streets
The impatient Merchant, wondering, waits in vain,
And Mecca saddens at the long delay.’ THOMSON.

To CHARLES LAMB, Esq.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

When I sent you, a few weeks ago, ‘The Tale of Peter Bell,’ you asked ‘why “The Waggoner” was not added?’—To say the truth,—from the higher tone of imagination, and the deeper touches of passion aimed at in the former, I apprehended, this little Piece could not accompany it without disadvantage. In the year 1806, if I am not mistaken, ‘The Waggoner’ was read to you in manuscript, and, as you have remembered it for so long a time, I am the more encouraged to hope that, since the localities on which the Poem partly depends did not prevent its being interesting to you, it may prove acceptable to others. Being therefore in some measure the cause of its present appearance, you must allow me the gratification of inscribing it to you ; in acknowledgment of the pleasure I have derived from your Writings, and of the high esteem with which I am very truly yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Rydal Mount, May 20, 1819.

122. * *The Waggoner.*

Town-End, 1805. The character and story from fact.

123. *Benjamin 'the Waggoner.'*

Several years after the event that forms the subject of the Poem, in company with my friend, the late Mr. Coleridge, I happened to fall in with the person to whom the name of Benjamin is given. Upon our expressing regret that we had not, for a long time, seen upon the road either him or his waggon, he said :—‘They could not do without me; and as to the man who was put in my place, no good could come out of him; he was a man of no *ideas*.’

The fact of my discarded hero’s getting the horses out of a difficulty with a word, as related in the poem, was told me by an eyewitness.

124. *The Dor-Hawk.*

‘The buzzing Dor-hawk round and round is wheeling’ (c. i. l. 3).

When the Poem was first written the note of the bird was thus described :—

‘The Night-hawk is singing his frog-like tune,
Twirling his watchman’s rattle about’—

but from unwillingness to startle the reader at the outset by so bold a mode of expression, the passage was altered as it now stands.

125. *Helmcrag* (c. i. l. 168).

A mountain of Grasmere, the broken summit of which presents two figures, full as distinctly shaped as that of the famous Cobbler near Arroquhar in Scotland.

126. *Merrynight* (c. ii. l. 30).

A term well known in the North of England, and applied to rural festivals where young persons meet in the evening for the purpose of dancing.

‘The fiddles squeak—that call to bliss’ (c. ii. l. 97).

At the close of each strathspey, or jig, a particular note from the fiddle summons the Rustic to the agreeable duty of saluting his partner.

127. *Ghimmer-Crag* (c. iii. l. 21).

The crag of the ewe-lamb.

VI. POEMS OF THE IMAGINATION.

128. * *There was a Boy.* [I.]

Written in Germany, 1799. This is an extract from the Poem on my own poetical education. This practice of making an instrument of their own fingers is known to most boys, though some are more skilful at it than others. William Raincock of Rayrigg, a fine spirited lad, took the lead of all my school-fellows in this art.

129. * *To the Cuckoo.* [II.]

Composed in the Orchard at Town-End, 1804.

130. * *A Night-piece.* [III.]

Composed on the road between Nether Stowey and Alfoxden, extempore. I distinctly remember the very moment when I was struck, as described, ‘He looks up at the clouds,’ &c.

131. * *Yew-trees.* [V.]

Grasmere, 1803. These Yew-trees are still standing, but the spread of that at Lorton is much diminished by mutilation. I will here mention that a little way up the hill on the road leading from Rossthwaite to Stonethwaite lay the trunk of a yew-tree which appeared as you approached, so vast was its diameter, like the entrance of a cave, and not a small one. Calculating upon what I have observed of the slow growth of this tree in rocky situations, and of its durability, I have often thought that the one I am describing must have been as old as the Christian era. The tree lay in the line of a fence. Great masses of its ruins were strewn about, and some had been rolled down the hill-side and lay near the road at the bottom. As you approached the tree you were struck with the number of shrubs and young plants, ashes, &c. which had found a bed upon the decayed trunk and grew to no inconsiderable height, forming, as it were, a part of the hedgerow. In no part of England, or of Europe, have I ever seen a yew-tree at all approaching this in magnitude, as it must have stood. By the bye, Hutton, the Old Guide of Keswick, had been so imprest with the remains of this

tree that he used gravely to tell strangers that there could be no doubt of its having been in existence before the Flood.

132. * *Nutting.* [vi.]

Written in Germany: intended as part of a poem on my own life, but struck out as not being wanted there. Like most of my school-fellows I was an impassioned Nutter. For this pleasure the Vale of Esthwaite, abounding in coppice wood, furnished a very wide range. These verses arose out of the remembrance of feelings I had often had when a boy, and particularly in the extensive woods that still stretch from the side of Esthwaite Lake towards Graythwaite, the seat of the ancient family of Sandys.

133. * *She was a Phantom of Delight.* [viii.]

1804. Town-End. The germ of this Poem was four lines composed as a part of the verses on the Highland Girl. Though beginning in this way, it was written from my heart, as is sufficiently obvious.

134. * *The Nightingale.* [ix.]

Town-End, 1806. [So, but corrected in pencil ‘Written at Coleorton.’]

135. * *Three Years she grew, &c.* [x.]

1799. Composed in the Hartz Forest. [In pencil on opposite page—Who?]

136. *I wandered lonely as a Cloud.* [xii.] [= ‘The Daffodils.’]

Town-End, 1804. ‘The Daffodils.’ The two best lines in it are by Mary. The daffodils grew and still grow on the margin of Ullswater, and probably may be seen to this day as beautiful in the month of March nodding their golden heads beside the dancing and foaming waves. [In pencil on opposite page—Mrs. Wordsworth—but which? See the answer to this, *infra.*]

137. *The Daffodils.* [xii.]

Grasmere, Nov. 4.

MY DEAR WRANGHAM,

I am indeed much pleased that Mrs. Wrangham and yourself have been gratified by these breathings of simple nature; the more so, because I conclude from the character of the Poems

which you have particularised that the Volumes cannot but improve upon you. I see that you have entered into the spirit of them. You mention ‘The Daffodils.’ You know Butler, Montagu’s friend: not Tom Butler, but the Conveyancer: when I was in town in spring, he happened to see the Volumes lying on Montagu’s mantle-piece, and to glance his eye upon the very poem of ‘The Daffodils.’ ‘Aye,’ says he, ‘a fine morsel this for the Reviewers.’ When this was told me (for I was not present), I observed that there were *two lines* in that little poem which, if thoroughly felt, would annihilate nine-tenths of the reviews of the kingdom, as they would find no readers; the lines I alluded to were these:

‘They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude.’

[These two lines were composed by Mrs. Wordsworth : *Memoirs*, i. 183-4.]

138. * *The Reverie of poor Susan.* [xiii.]

Written 1801 or 1802. This arose out of my observations of the affecting music of these birds, hanging in this way in the London streets during the freshness and stillness of the Spring morning.

139. * *Power of Music.* [xiv.]

Taken from life, 1806.

140. * *Star-gazers.* [xv.]

Observed by me in Leicester Square, as here described, 1806.

141. * *Written in March.* [xvi.]

Extempore, 1801. This little poem was a favourite with Joanna Baillie.

142. * *Beggars.* [xviii.]

Town-End, 1802. Met and described by me to my sister near the Quarry at the head of Rydal Lake—a place still a chosen resort of vagrants travelling with their families.

143. * *Gipsies.* [xx.]

Composed at Coleorton, 1807. I had observed them, as

here described, near Castle Donnington on my way to and from Derby.

144. * *Ruth.*

Written in Germany, 1799. Suggested by an account I had of a wanderer in Somersetshire.

145. * *Resolution and Independence.* [xxii.]

Town-End, 1807. This old man I met a few hundred yards from my cottage at Town-End, Grasmere ; and the account of him is taken from his own mouth. I was in the state of feeling described in the beginning of the poem, while crossing over Barton Fell from Mr. Clarkson's at the foot of Ullswater, towards Askham. The image of the hare I then observed on the ridge of the Fell.

146. * *The Thorn.* [xxiii.]

Alfoxden, 1798. Arose out of my observing on the ridge of Quantock Hill, on a stormy day, a thorn, which I had often past in calm and bright weather without noticing it. I said to myself, cannot I by some invention do as much to make this Thorn permanently an impressive object as the storm has made it to my eyes at this moment ? I began the poem accordingly, and composed it with great rapidity. Sir George Beaumont painted a picture from it, which Wilkie thought his best. He gave it to me ; though, when he saw it several times at Rydal Mount afterwards, he said, 'I could make a better, and would like to paint the same subject over again.' The sky in this picture is nobly done, but it reminds one too much of Wilson. The only fault however, of any consequence, is the female figure, which is too old and decrepit for one likely to frequent an eminence on such a call.

147. *Hart-Leap Well.* [xxiv.]

Hart-Leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond in Yorkshire, and near the side of the road that leads from Richmond to Askriigg. Its name is derived from a remarkable Chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the second Part of the following Poem, which monuments do now exist as I have there described them.

148. *Ibid.*

Town-End, 1800. The first eight stanzas were composed

extempore one winter evening in the cottage ; when, after having tired and disgusted myself with labouring at an awkward passage in ‘The Brothers,’ I started with a sudden impulse to this, to get rid of the other, and finished it in a day or two. My sister and I had past the place a few weeks before in our wild winter journey from Sockburn on the banks of the Tees to Grasmere. A peasant whom we met near the spot told us the story, so far as concerned the name of the well, and the hart, and pointed out the stones. Both the stones and the well are objects that may easily be missed : the tradition by this time may be extinct in the neighbourhood : the man who related it to us was very old.

[In pencil on opposite page—See Dryden’s dog and hare in *Annus Mirabilis.*.]

149. *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle.* [xxv.]

Henry Lord Clifford, &c. &c., who is the subject of this Poem, was the son of John Lord Clifford, who was slain at Towton Field, which John Lord Clifford, as is known to the reader of English history, was the person who after the battle of Wakefield slew, in the pursuit, the young Earl of Rutland, son of the Duke of York, who had fallen in the battle, ‘in part of revenge’ (say the Authors of the *History of Cumberland and Westmoreland*) ; ‘for the Earl’s father had slain his.’ A deed which worthily blemished the author (saith Speed) ; but who, as he adds, ‘dare promise anything temperate of himself in the heat of martial fury ? chiefly, when it was resolved not to leave any branch of the York line standing ; for so one maketh this Lord to speak.’ This, no doubt, I would observe by the bye, was an action sufficiently in the vindictive spirit of the times, and yet not altogether so bad as represented ; ‘for the Earl was no child, as some writers would have him, but able to bear arms, being sixteen or seventeen years of age, as is evident from this, (say the *Memoirs of the Countess of Pembroke*, who was laudably anxious to wipe away, as far as could be, this stigma from the illustrious name to which she was born,) that he was the next child to King Edward the Fourth, which his mother had by Richard Duke of York, and that King was then eighteen years of age : and for the small distance betwixt her children, see Austin Vincent, in his *Book of Nobility*, p. 622,

where he writes of them all. It may further be observed, that Lord Clifford, who was then himself only 25 years of age, had been a leading man and commander, two or three years together in the army of Lancaster, before this time ; and, therefore, would be less likely to think that the Earl of Rutland might be entitled to mercy from his youth.—But, independent of this act, at best a cruel and savage one, the Family of Clifford had done enough to draw upon them the vehement hatred of the House of York : so that after the battle of Towton there was no hope for them but in flight and concealment. Henry, the subject of the poem, was deprived of his estate and honours during the space of twenty-four years ; all which time he lived as a shepherd in Yorkshire, or in Cumberland, where the estate of his father-in-law (Sir Lancelot Threlkeld) lay. He was restored to his estate and honours in the first year of Henry the Seventh. It is recorded that, ‘when called to Parliament, he behaved nobly and wisely ; but otherwise came seldom to London or the Court ; and rather delighted to live in the country, where he repaired several of his castles, which had gone to decay during the late troubles.’ Thus far is chiefly collected from Nicholson and Burn ; and I can add, from my own knowledge, that there is a tradition current in the village of Threlkeld and its neighbourhood, his principal retreat, that, in the course of his shepherd-life, he had acquired great astronomical knowledge. I cannot conclude this note without adding a word upon the subject of those numerous and noble feudal Edifices, spoken of in the Poem, the ruins of some of which are, at this day, so great an ornament to that interesting country. The Cliffords had always been distinguished for an honourable pride in these Castles ; and we have seen that after the wars of York and Lancaster they were rebuilt ; in the civil wars of Charles the First they were again laid waste, and again restored almost to their former magnificence by the celebrated Mary Anne Clifford, Countess of Pembroke, &c. &c. Not more than twenty-five years after this was done, when the estates of Clifford had passed into the family of Tufton, three of these castles, namely, Brough, Brougham, and Pendragon, were demolished, and the timber and other materials sold by Thomas Earl of Thanet. We will hope that, when this order was issued, the Earl had not consulted the text of Isaiah, 58th chap. 12th verse, to which the inscription placed

over the gate of Pendragon Castle, by the Countess of Pembroke (I believe his grandmother), at the time she repaired that structure, refers the reader:—‘*And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in.*’ The Earl of Thanet, the present possessor of the estates, with a due respect for the memory of his ancestors, and a proper sense of the value and beauty of these remains of antiquity, has (I am told) given orders that they shall be preserved from all depredations.

150. * *Ibid.*

See the note attached. This poem was composed at Coleorton, while I was walking to and fro along the path that led from Sir George Beaumont’s farm-house, where we resided, to the Hall, which was building at that time.

151. *Sir John Beaumont.*

‘Earth helped him with the cry of blood’ (l. 27).

This line is from ‘The Battle of Bosworth Field,’ by Sir John Beaumont (brother to the dramatist), whose poems are written with much spirit, elegance, and harmony; and have deservedly been reprinted in Chalmers’ *Collection of English Poets.*

152. *The undying Fish of Bowscale Tarn* (l. 122).

It is believed by the people of the country that there are two immortal fish, inhabitants of this Tarn, which lies in the mountains not far from Threlkeld—Blencathara, mentioned before, is the old and proper name of the mountain vulgarly called Saddleback.

153. *The Cliffords.*

‘Armour rusting in his Halls
On the blood of Clifford calls’ (ll. 142-3).

The martial character of the Cliffords is well known to the readers of English history; but it may not be improper here to say, by way of comment on these lines and what follows, that besides several others who perished in the same manner, the four immediate Progenitors of the Person in whose hearing this is supposed to be spoken all died on the Field.

154. * *Tintern Abbey.* [xxvi.]

July 1798. No poem of mine was composed under circumstances more pleasant for me to remember than this. I began it upon leaving Tintern, after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was entering Bristol in the evening, after a ramble of four or five days with my sister. Not a line of it was altered, and not any part of it written down till I reached Bristol. It was published almost immediately after in the little volume of which so much has been said in these notes, the ‘Lyrical Ballads,’ as first published at Bristol by Cottle.

155. * *It is no Spirit, &c.* [xxvii.]

1803. Town-End. I remember the instant my sister Sarah Hutchinson called me to the window of our cottage saying, ‘Look, how beautiful is yon star! It has the sky all to itself.’ I composed the verses immediately.

156. *French Revolution.* [xxviii.]

An extract from the long poem on my own poetical education. It was first published by Coleridge in his *Friend*, which is the reason of its having had a place in every edition of my poems since.

157. * *Yes, it was the Mountain Echo.* [xxix.]

Town-End, 1806. The Echo came from Nabscar, when I was walking on the opposite side of Rydal Mere. I will here mention, for my dear sister’s sake, that while she was sitting alone one day, high up on this part of Loughrigg Fell, she was so affected by the voice of the cuckoo, heard from the crags at some distance, that she could not suppress a wish to have a stone inscribed with her name among the rocks from which the sound proceeded. On my return from my walk I recited those verses to Mary, who was then confined with her son Thomas, who died in his seventh year, as recorded on his headstone in Grasmere Church-yard.

158. *To a Skylark.* [xxx.]

Rydal Mount, 1825. [In pencil—Where there are no skylarks; but the poet is everywhere.]

159. * *Laodamia.* [xxxI.]

Rydal Mount, 1814. Written at the same time as ‘Dion,’ and ‘Artegal,’ and ‘Elidure.’ The incident of the trees growing and withering put the subject into my thoughts, and I wrote with the hope of giving it a loftier tone than, so far as I know, has been given it by any of the ancients who have treated of it. It cost me more trouble than almost anything of equal length I have ever written.

160. *Withered Trees* (foot-note).

‘The trees’ tall summits withered at the sight’ (l. 73).

For the account of long-lived trees, see King’s [*Natural History*, lib. xvi. cap. 44; and for the features in the character of Protesilaus, see the *Iphigenia in Aulis* of Euripides.

161. * *Dion.* [xxxII.]

This poem was first introduced by a stanza that I have since transferred to the notes, for reasons there given ; and I cannot comply with the request expressed by some of my friends, that the rejected stanza should be restored. I hope they will be content if it be hereafter immediately attached to the poem, instead of its being degraded to a place in the notes.

The ‘reasons’ (*supra*) are thus given : This poem began with the following stanza, which has been displaced on account of its detaining the reader too long from the subject, and as rather precluding, than preparing for, the due effect of the allusion to the genius of Plato.

162. *Fair is the Swan, &c.* [xxxIII.] (See *supra*, 161.)163. * *The Pass of Kirkstone.*

Rydal Mount, 1817. Thoughts and feelings of many walks in all weathers by day and night over this Pass alone, and with beloved friends.

164. * *To —————.* [xxxV.]

Rydal Mount, 1816. The lady was Miss Blackett, then residing with Mr. Montague Burgoyne, at Fox-Ghyll. We were tempted to remain too long upon the mountain, and I impru-

dently, with the hope of shortening the way, led her among the crags and down a steep slope, which entangled us in difficulties, that were met by her with much spirit and courage.

165. * *To a Young Lady.* [xxxvi.]

Composed at the same time, and on the same vein, as ‘I met Louisa in the Shade.’ Indeed they were designed to make one piece. [See No. 52.]

166. * *Water-fowl.* [xxxvii.]

Observed frequently over the lakes of Rydal and Grasmere.

167. * *View from the Top of Black Comb.* [xxxviii.]

1813. Mary and I, as mentioned in the Epistle to Sir G. Beaumont, lived some time under its shadow.

168. * *The Haunted Tree.* [xxxix.]

1819. This tree grew in the park of Rydal, and I have often listened to its creaking as described.

169. * *The Triad.* [xl.]

‘Rydal Mount, 1828. The girls Edith Mary Southey, my daughter Dora, and Sarah Coleridge.’ More fully on this and others contemporaneously written, is the following letter :

To G. H. GORDON, Esq.

Rydal Mount, Dec. 15, 1828.

How strange that any one should be puzzled with the name ‘Triad’ after reading the poem ! I have turned to Dr. Johnson, and there find ‘*Triad, three united,*’ and not a word more, as nothing more was needed. I should have been rather mortified if you had not liked the piece, as I think it contains some of the happiest verses I ever wrote. It had been promised several years to two of the party before a fancy fit for the performance struck me ; it was then thrown off rapidly, and afterwards revised with care. During the last week I wrote some stanzas on the *Power of Sound*, which ought to find a place in my larger work if aught should ever come of that.

In the book on the Lakes, which I have not at hand, is a

passage rather too vaguely expressed, where I content myself with saying, that after a certain point of elevation the effect of mountains depends much more upon their form than upon their absolute height. This point, which ought to have been defined, is the one to which fleecy clouds (not thin watery vapours) are accustomed to descend. I am glad you are so much interested with this little tract; it could not have been written without long experience.

I remain, most faithfully,
Your much obliged,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

170. *The Wishing-gate.* [XLI.]

In the Vale of Grasmere, by the side of the old highway leading to Ambleside, is a gate which, time out of mind, has been called the ‘Wishing-gate,’ from a belief that wishes formed or indulged there have a favourable issue.

171. *The Wishing-gate destroyed.*

Having been told, upon what I thought good authority, that this gate had been destroyed, and the opening, where it hung, walled up, I gave vent immediately to my feelings in these stanzas. But going to the place some time after, I found, with much delight, my old favourite unmolested. [* Rydal Mount, 1828.]

172. * *The Primrose of the Rock.* [XLIII.]

Rydal Mount, 1821. It stands on the right hand, a little way leading up the vale from Grasmere to Rydal. We have been in the habit of calling it the glow-worm rock, from the number of glow-worms we have often seen hanging on it as described. The tuft of primrose has, I fear, been washed away by heavy rains.

173. * *Presentiments.* [XLIV.]

Rydal Mount, 1830.

174. * *Vernal Ode.* [XLV.]

Rydal Mount, 1817. Composed to place in view the immortality of succession where immortality is denied, so far as we know, to the individual creature.

175. * *Devotional Incitements.* [XLVI.]

Rydal Mount, 1832.

176. * *The Cuckoo-Clock.* [XLVII.]

Of this clock I have nothing further to say than what the poem expresses, except that it must be here recorded that it was a present from the dear friend for whose sake these notes were chiefly undertaken, and who has written them from my dictation.

177. * *To the Clouds.* [XLVIII.]

These verses were suggested while I was walking on the foot-road between Rydal Mount and Grasmere. The clouds were driving over the top of Nab-Scar across the vale; they set my thoughts agoing, and the rest followed almost immediately.

178. * *Suggested by a Picture of the Bird of Paradise.* [XLIX.]

This subject has been treated of before (see a former note). I will here only, by way of comment, direct attention to the fact, that pictures of animals and other productions of Nature, as seen in conservatories, menageries and museums, &c., would do little for the national mind, nay, they would be rather injurious to it, if the imagination were excluded by the presence of the object, more or less out of the state of Nature. If it were not that we learn to talk and think of the lion and the eagle, the palm-tree, and even the cedar, from the impassioned introduction of them so frequently in Holy Scripture, and by great poets, and divines who write as poets, the spiritual part of our nature, and therefore the higher part of it, would derive no benefit from such intercourse with such subjects.

179. * *A Jewish Family.* [L.]

Coleridge and my daughter and I in 1828 passed a fortnight upon the banks of the Rhine, principally under the hospitable roof of Mr. Aders at Gotesburg, but two days of the time were spent at St. Goa or in rambles among the neighbouring vallies. It was at St. Goa that I saw the Jewish family here described. Though exceedingly poor, and in rags, they were not less beautiful than I have endeavoured to make them appear. We had

taken a little dinner with us in a basket, and invited them to partake of it, which the mother refused to do both for herself and her children, saying it was with them a fast-day ; adding diffidently, that whether such observances were right or wrong, she felt it her duty to keep them strictly. The Jews, who are numerous in this part of the Rhine, greatly surpass the German peasantry in the beauty of their features and in the intelligence of their countenances. But the lower classes of the German peasantry have, here at least, the air of people grievously oppressed. Nursing mothers at the age of seven or eight and twenty often look haggard and far more decayed and withered than women of Cumberland and Westmoreland twice their age. This comes from being under-fed and over-worked in their vineyards in a hot and glaring sun. [In pencil on opposite page—The three went from my house in Bryanston-street, London—E. Q.]

180. * *On the Power of Sound.* [L1.]

Rydal Mount, 1828. I have often regretted that my tour in Ireland, chiefly performed in the short days of October in a carriage and four (I was with Mr. Marshall), supplied my memory with so few images that were new and with so little motive to write. The lines, however, in this poem, ‘Thou too he heard, lone eagle !’ &c., were suggested near the Giant’s Causeway, or rather at the promontory of Fairhead, where a pair of eagles wheeled above our heads, and darted off as if to hide themselves in a blaze of sky made by the setting sun.

181. *Peter Bell: a Tale.*

DEDICATION.

‘What’s in a Name?’

‘Brutus will start a Spirit as soon as Cæsar !’

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, Esq., P.L., ETC., ETC.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The Tale of ‘Peter Bell,’ which I now introduce to your notice, and to that of the Public, has, in its Manuscript state, nearly survived its *minority* :—for it first saw the light in the summer of 1798. During this long interval, pains have been taken at different times to make the production less unworthy of a favourable reception ; or, rather, to fit it for filling

permanently a station, however humble, in the Literature of our Country. This has, indeed, been the aim of all my endeavours in Poetry, which, you know, have been sufficiently laborious to prove that I deem the Art not lightly to be approached; and that the attainment of excellence in it may laudably be made the principal object of intellectual pursuit by any man who, with reasonable consideration of circumstances, has faith in his own impulses.

The Poem of 'Peter Bell,' as the Prologue will show, was composed under a belief that the Imagination not only does not require for its exercise the intervention of supernatural agency, but that, though such agency be excluded, the faculty may be called forth as imperiously and for kindred results of pleasure, by incidents, within the compass of poetic probability, in the humblest departments of daily life. Since that Prologue was written, *you* have exhibited most splendid effects of judicious daring, in the opposite and usual course. Let this acknowledgment make my peace with the lovers of the supernatural; and I am persuaded it will be admitted that to you, as a Master in that province of the art, the following Tale, whether from contrast or congruity, is not an inappropriate offering. Accept it, then, as a public testimony of affectionate admiration from one with whose name yours has been often coupled (to use your own words) for evil and for good; and believe me to be, with earnest wishes that life and health may be granted you to complete the many important works in which you are engaged, and with high respect,

Most faithfully yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Rydal Mount, April 7, 1819.

182. *Peter Bell: the Poem.*

Alfoxden, 1798. Founded upon an anecdote which I read in a newspaper, of an ass being found hanging his head over a canal in a wretched posture. Upon examination a dead body was found in the water, and proved to be the body of its master. The countenance, gait, and figure of Peter were taken from a wild rover with whom I walked from Builth, on the river Wye, downwards, nearly as far as the town of Hay. He told me strange stories. It has always been a pleasure to me, through

life, to catch at every opportunity that has occurred in my rambles of becoming acquainted with this class of people. The number of Peter's wives was taken from the trespasses, in this way, of a lawless creature who lived in the county of Durham, and used to be attended by many women, sometimes not less than half a dozen, as disorderly as himself; and a story went in the country, that he had been heard to say while they were quarrelling, 'Why can't you be quiet, there's none so many of you.' Benoni, or the child of sorrow, I knew when I was a school-boy. His mother had been deserted by a gentleman in the neighbourhood, she herself being a gentlewoman by birth. The circumstances of her story were told me by my dear old dame, Ann Tyson, who was her confidante. The lady died broken-hearted. In the woods of Alfoxden I used to take great delight in noticing the habits, tricks, and physiognomy of asses; and I have no doubt that I was thus put upon writing the poem out of liking for the creature that is so often dreadfully abused. The crescent moon, which makes such a figure in the prologue, assumed this character one evening while I was watching its beauty in front of Alfoxden House. I intended this poem for the volume before spoken of, but it was not published for more than twenty years afterwards. The worship of the Methodists, or Ranters, is often heard during the stillness of the summer evening, in the country, with affecting accompaniments of rural beauty. In both the psalmody and voice of the preacher there is, not unfrequently, much solemnity likely to impress the feelings of the rudest characters under favourable circumstances.

Potter (foot-note).

'A Potter, Sir, he was by trade' (Pt. I. l. 11).

In the dialect of the North, a hawker of earthenware is thus designated.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS.

PART I.

183. * *Commencement of writing of Sonnets.*

In the cottage of Town-End, one afternoon in 1801, my sister read to me the sonnets of Milton. I had long been well acquainted with them, but I was particularly struck on that occasion with the dignified simplicity and majestic harmony that

runs through most of them—in character so totally different from the Italian, and still more so from Shakespeare's fine sonnets. I took fire, if I may be allowed to say so, and produced three sonnets the same afternoon—the first I ever wrote, except an irregular one at school. Of these three, the only one I distinctly remember is ‘I grieved for Buonaparte,’ &c. One was never written down; the third, which was I believe preserved, I cannot particularise.

184. *Admonition.*

‘Well mays't thou halt,’ &c. [II.]

Intended more particularly for the perusal of those who have happened to be enamoured of some beautiful place of retreat in the Country of the Lakes.

185. * *Sonnet iv.*

‘Beaumont! it was thy wish,’ &c.

This was presented to me by Sir George Beaumont, with a view to the erection of a house upon it, for the sake of being near to Coleridge, then living, and likely to remain, at Greta Hall, near Keswick. The severe necessities that prevented this arose from his domestic situation. This little property, with a considerable addition that still leaves it very small, lies beautifully upon the banks of a rill that gurgles down the side of Skiddaw; and the orchard and other parts of the grounds command a magnificent prospect of Derwent Water, the Mountains of Borrowdale and Newlands. Not many years ago I gave the place to my daughter. [In pencil on opposite page in Mrs. Quillinan's handwriting—Many years ago, sir, for it was given when she was a frail feeble monthling.]

186. * *Sonnet vi.*

‘There is a little unpretending rill.’

This rill trickles down the hillside into Windermere near Lowood. My sister and I, on our first visit together to this part of the country, walked from Kendal, and we rested to refresh ourselves by the side of the Lake where the streamlet falls into it. This sonnet was written some years after in recollection of that happy ramble, that most happy day and hour.

187. * *Sonnet VIII.*

‘The fairest, brightest hues,’ &c.

Suggested at Hackett, which is the craggy ridge that rises between the two Langdales, and looks towards Windermere. The cottage of Hackett was often visited by us ; and at the time when this sonnet was written, and long after, was occupied by the husband and wife described in ‘The Excursion,’ where it is mentioned that she was in the habit of walking in the front of the dwelling with a light to guide her husband home at night. The same cottage is alluded to in the Epistle to Sir G. Beaumont as that from which the female peasant hailed us on our morning journey. The musician mentioned in the sonnet was the Rev. P. Tilbrook of Peterhouse, who remodelled the Ivy Cottage at Rydal after he had purchased it.

188. ‘*The Genius.*’

‘Such strains of rapture as the Genius played.

See the ‘Vision of Mirza’ in the *Spectator*.

189. * *Sonnet IX.*

Upon the sight of a beautiful picture.

This was written when we dwelt in the Parsonage at Grasmere. The principal features of the picture are Bredon Hill and Cloud Hill, near Coleorton. I shall never forget the happy feeling with which my heart was filled when I was impelled to compose this sonnet. We resided only two years in this house ; and during the last half of this time, which was after this poem had been written, we lost our two children, Thomas and Catherine. Our sorrow upon these events often brought it to my mind, and cast me upon the support to which the last line of it gives expression :

‘The appropriate calm of blest eternity.’

It is scarcely necessary to add that we still possess the picture.

190. * *Sonnet xi.*

Aerial Rock.

A projecting point of Loughrigg, nearly in front of Rydal Mount. Thence looking at it, you are struck with the boldness of its aspect ; but walking under it, you admire the beauty of its details. It is vulgarly called Holme-scar, probably from the insulated pasture by the waterside below it.

191. * *Sonnet xv.*

The Wild Duck's Nest.

I observed this beautiful nest on the largest island of Rydal Water.

192. * *Sonnet xix.*

'Grief thou hast lost,' &c.

I could write a treatise of lamentation upon the changes brought about among the cottages of Westmoreland by the silence of the spinning-wheel. During long winter's nights and wet days, the wheel upon which wool was spun gave employment to a great part of a family. The old man, however infirm, was able to card the wool, as he sate in the corner by the fire-side ; and often, when a boy, have I admired the cylinders of carded wool which were softly laid upon each other by his side. Two wheels were often at work on the same floor, and others of the family, chiefly the little children, were occupied in teasing and clearing the wool to fit it for the hand of the carder. So that all, except the infants, were contributing to mutual support. Such was the employment that prevailed in the pastoral vales. Where wool was not at hand, in the small rural towns, the wheel for spinning flax was almost in as constant use, if knitting was not preferred ; which latter occupation had the advantage (in some cases disadvantage) that not being of necessity stationary, it allowed of gossiping about from house to house, which good housewives reckoned an idle thing.

193. * *Sonnet xxii.*

Decay of Piety.

Attendance at church on prayer-days, Wednesdays and Fridays and holidays, received a shock at the Revolution. It is

now, however, happily reviving. The ancient people described in this sonnet were among the last of that pious class. May we hope that the practice now in some degree renewed will continue to spread.

194. * *Sonnets xxiv. xxv. xxvi.*

Translations from Michael Angelo, done at the request of Mr. Duppa, whose acquaintance I made through Mr. Southey. Mr. Duppa was engaged in writing the life of Michael Angelo, and applied to Mr. Southey and myself to furnish some specimens of his poetic genius.

195. * *Sonnet xxvii.*

‘Surprised by joy,’ &c.

This was in fact suggested by my daughter Catherine long after her death.

196. * *Sonnets xxviii. xxix.*

‘Methought I saw,’ &c. ‘Even so for me,’ &c.

The latter part of the first of these was a great favourite with my sister, Sara Hutchinson. When I saw her lying in death, I could not resist the impulse to compose the sonnet that follows.

197. * *Sonnet xxx.*

‘It is a beauteous evening,’ &c.

This was composed on the beach near Calais, in the autumn of 1802.

198. * *Sonnet xxxvi.*

‘Calvert! it must not be,’ &c.

This young man, Raisley Calvert, to whom I was so much indebted, died at Penrith, 179—.

PART II.

199. * *Sonnet iv.*

‘From the dark chambers,’ &c.

Composed in Edinburgh, during my Scotch tour with Mary and Sara, in the year 1814. Poor Gillies never rose above the course of extravagance in which he was at that time living, and which soon reduced him to poverty and all its degrading shifts,

mendicity being far from the worst. I grieve whenever I think of him; for he was far from being without genius, and had a generous heart--which is not always to be found in men given up to profusion. He was nephew of Lord Gillies, the Scotch judge, and also of the historian of Greece. He was cousin of Miss Margaret Gillies, who painted so many portraits with success in our house.

200. * *Sonnet v.*

'Fool, prime of life,' &c.

Suggested by observation of the way in which a young friend, whom I do not choose to name, misspent his time and misapplied his talents. He took afterwards a better course, and became an useful member of society, respected, I believe, wherever he has been known.

201. * *Sonnet vi.*

'I watch, and long have watched,' &c.

Suggested in front of Rydal Mount, the rocky parapet being the summit of Loughrigg Fell opposite. Not once only but a hundred times have the feelings of this sonnet been awakened by the same objects from the same place.

202. *Sonnet vii.*

'The ungenial Hollow.'

See the 'Phaedon' of Plato, by which this sonnet was suggested.

203. *Sonnet viii.*

'For the whole weight,' &c.

Composed, almost extempore, in a short walk on the western side of Rydal Lake.

204. * *Sonnet x.*

'Mark the concentrated hazels,' &c.

Suggested in the wild hazel-wood at foot of Helm-Crag, where the stone still lies, with others of like form and character, though much of the wood that veiled it from the glare of day has been felled. This beautiful ground was lately purchased by our friend, Mrs. Fletcher, the ancient owners, most respected persons, being obliged to part with it in consequence of the imprudence, if not misconduct, of a son. It is gratifying to mention that instead of murmuring and repining at this change of

fortune they offered their services to Mrs. Fletcher, the husband as an out-door labourer and the wife as a domestic servant. I have witnessed the pride and pleasure with which the man worked at improvements of the ground round the house. Indeed he expressed them to me himself, and the countenance and manner of his wife always denoted feelings of the same character. I believe a similar disposition to contentment under change of fortune is common among the class to which these good people belong. Yet, in proof that to part with their patrimony is most painful to them, I may refer to those stanzas entitled ‘Repentance,’ no inconsiderable part of which was taken *verbatim* from the language of the speaker himself. [In pencil —Herself, M. N.]

205. * *Sonnet xi.*

‘Dark and more dark,’ &c.

October 3d or 4th, 1802. Composed after a journey over the Hambleton Hills, on a day memorable to me—the day of my marriage. The horizon commanded by those hills is most magnificent.

The next day, while we were travelling in a post-chaise up Wensley Dale, we were stopt by one of the horses proving restiff, and were obliged to wait two hours in a severe storm before the post-boy could fetch from the Inn another to supply its place. The spot was in front of Bolton Hall, where Mary Queen of Scots was kept prisoner soon after her unfortunate landing at Workington. The place then belonged to the Scroopes, and memorials of her are yet preserved there. To beguile the time I composed a sonnet. The subject was our own confinement contrasted with hers; but it was not thought worthy of being preserved.

206. * *Sonnet XIII.*

‘While not a leaf,’ &c.

September 1815. ‘For me, who under kindlier laws,’ &c. (l. 9). This conclusion has more than once, to my great regret, excited painfully sad feelings in the hearts of young persons fond of poetry and poetic composition by contrast of their feeble and declining health with that state of robust constitution which prompted me to rejoice in a season of frost and snow as more favourable to the Muses than summer itself.

207. * *Sonnet xiv.*

‘How clear, how keen,’ &c.

November 1st. Suggested on the banks of the Brathay by the sight of Langdale Pikes. It is delightful to remember those moments of far-distant days, which probably would have been forgotten if the impression had not been transferred to verse. The same observation applies to the rest.

208. * *Sonnet xv.*

‘One who was suffering,’ &c.

Composed during a storm in Rydal Wood by the side of a torrent.

209. * *Sonnet xviii.*

‘Lady, the songs of Spring,’ &c.

1807. To Lady Beaumont. The winter garden of Coleorton, fashioned out of an old quarry under the superintendence and direction of Mrs. Wordsworth and my sister Dorothy, during the Winter and Spring of the year we resided there.

210. * *Sonnet xix.*

‘There is a pleasure,’ &c.

Written on a journey from Brinsop Court, Herefordshire.

211. * *Sonnet xxix.*

‘Though narrow,’ &c.

1807. Coleorton. This old man’s name was Mitchell. He was, in all his ways and conversation, a great curiosity, both individually and as a representative of past times. His chief employment was keeping watch at night by pacing round the house at that time building, to keep off depredators. He has often told me gravely of having seen the ‘Seven Whistlers and the Hounds’ as here described. Among the groves of Coleorton, where I became familiar with the habits and notions of old Mitchell, there was also a labourer of whom I regret I had no personal knowledge; for, more than forty years after, when he was become an old man, I learnt that while I was composing verses, which I usually did aloud, he took much pleasure, unknown to me, in following my steps, that he might catch the words I uttered, and, what is not a little remarkable, several

lines caught in this way kept their place in his memory. My volumes have lately been given to him, by my informant, and surely he must have been gratified to meet in print his old acquaintance.

212. * *Sonnet xxx.*

'Four fiery steeds,' &c.

Suggested on the road between Preston and Lancaster, where it first gives a view of the Lake country, and composed on the same day, on the roof of the coach.

213. * *Sonnet xxxi.*

'Brook! whose society,' &c.

Also composed on the roof of a coach, on my way to France, September 1802.

214. * *Sonnets xxxiii.-v.*

'Waters.'

Waters (as Mr. Westall informs us in the letter-press prefixed to his admirable views [of the Caves, &c. of Yorkshire]) are invariably found to flow through these caverns.

PART III.

215. * *Sonnet vi.*

'Fame tells of Groves,' &c.

Wallachia is the country alluded to.

216. * *Sonnet vii.*

'Where lively ground,' &c.

This parsonage was the residence of my friend Jones, and is particularly described in another note.

217. * *Sonnet ix.*

'A stream to mingle,' &c.

In this Vale of Meditation ['Glen Mywr'] my friend Jones resided, having been allowed by his Diocesan to fix himself there without resigning his living in Oxfordshire. He was with my wife and daughter and me when we visited these celebrated ladies, who had retired, as one may say, into notice in this vale. Their cottage lay directly in the road between London and

Dublin, and they were, of course, visited by their Irish friends as well as innumerable strangers. They took much delight in passing jokes on our friend Jones's plumpness, ruddy cheeks, and smiling countenance, as little suited to a hermit living in the Vale of Meditation. We all thought there was ample room for retort on his part, so curious was the appearance of these ladies, so elaborately sentimental about themselves and their *caro Albergo*, as they named it in an inscription on a tree that stood opposite, the endearing epithet being preceded by the word *Ecco!* calling upon the saunterer to look about him. So oddly was one of these ladies attired that we took her, at a little distance, for a Roman Catholic priest, with a crucifix and relics hung at his neck. They were without caps; their hair bushy and white as snow, which contributed to the mistake.

218. *Sonnet xi.*

In the Woods of Rydal.

This Sonnet, as Poetry, explains itself, yet the scene of the incident having been a wild wood, it may be doubted, as a point of natural history, whether the bird was aware that his attentions were bestowed upon a human, or even a living creature. But a Redbreast will perch upon the foot of a gardener at work, and alight on the handle of the spade when his hand is half upon it. This I have seen. And under my own roof I have witnessed affecting instances of the creature's friendly visits to the chambers of sick persons, as described in the verses to the Redbreast [No. 83]. One of these welcome intruders used frequently to roost upon a nail in the wall, from which a picture had hung, and was ready, as morning came, to pipe his song in the hearing of the invalid, who had been long confined to her room. These attachments to a particular person, when marked and continued, used to be reckoned ominous; but the superstition is passing away.

219. * *Sonnet XIII.*

'While Anna's peers,' &c.

This is taken from the account given by Miss Jewsbury of the pleasure she derived, when long confined to her bed by sickness, from the inanimate object on which this Sonnet turns.

220. * *Sonnet xv.*

'Wait, prithee wait,' &c.

The fate of this poor dove, as described, was told to me at Brinsop Court by the young lady to whom I have given the name of Lesbia.

221. * *Sonnet xvi.*

'Unquiet childhood,' &c.

The infant was Mary Monkhouse, the only daughter of our friend and cousin Thomas Monkhouse.

222. * *Sonnet xvii.*

'Such age how beautiful!' &c.

Lady Fitzgerald as described to me by Lady Beaumont.

223. * *Sonnet xviii.*

'Rotha! my spiritual child,' &c.

Rotha, the daughter of my son-in-law Mr. Quillinan.

224. *The Rotha.*

'The peaceful mountain stream,' &c.

The river Rotha, that flows into Windermere from the Lakes of Grasmere and Rydal.

225. * *Sonnet xix.*

'Miserrimus.'

Many conjectures have been formed as to the person who lies under this stone. Nothing appears to be known for a certainty. ? The Rev. Mr. Morris, a Nonconformist, a sufferer for conscience' sake; a worthy man, who having been deprived of his benefice after the accession of William III. lived to an old age in extreme destitution, on the alms of charitable Jacobites.

226. * *Sonnet xx.*

'While poring,' &c.

My attention to these antiquities was directed by Mr. Walker, son to the itinerant Eidouranian philosopher. The beautiful pavement was discovered within a few yards of the front door of his parsonage, and appeared (from the site in full view of

several hills upon which there had formerly been Roman encampments) as if it might have been the villa of the commander of the forces; at least such was Mrs. W.'s conjecture.

227. * *Sonnet xxi.*

' Chatsworth ! thy stately mansion,' &c.

I have reason to remember the day that gave rise to this Sonnet, the 6th of November 1830. Having undertaken—a great feat for me—to ride my daughter's pony from Westmoreland to Cambridge, that she might have the use of it while on a visit to her uncle at Trinity Lodge, on my way from Bakewell to Matlock I turned aside to Chatsworth, and had scarcely gratified my curiosity by the sight of that celebrated place before there came on a severe storm of wind and rain, which continued till I reached Derby, both man and pony in a pitiable plight. For myself I went to bed at noon-day. In the course of that journey I had to encounter a storm worse if possible, in which the pony could (or would) only make his way slantwise. I mention this merely to add, that notwithstanding this battering, I composed on pony-back the lines to the memory of Sir George Beaumont, suggested during my recent visit to Coleorton.

228. * *Sonnet xxii.*

' Tis said that to the brow,' &c.

This pleasing tradition was told me by the coachman at whose side I sate while he drove down the dale, he pointing to the trees on the hill as he related the story.

229. * *Sonnet xxiii.*

' Untouched through all severity of cold.'

This was also communicated to me by a coachman in the same way. In the course of my many coach rambles and journeys, which, during the daytime always, and often in the night, were taken on the outside of the coach, I had good and frequent opportunities of learning the character of this class of men. One remark I made, that is worth recording, that whenever I had occasion especially to notice their well-ordered, respectful, and kind behaviour to women, of whatever age, I found them, I may say almost always, to be married men.

230. * *Sonnet xxiv.*

‘ Go, faithful Tishart,’ &c.

The six last lines of this sonnet are not written for poetical effect, but as a matter of fact, which in more than one instance could not escape my notice in the servants of the house.

231. * *Sonnet xxv.*

‘ Why art thou silent?’

In the month of January [blank], when Dora and I were walking from Town-End, Grasmere, across the vale, snow being on the ground, she espied in the thick though leafless hedge a bird’s-nest half filled with snow. Out of this comfortless appearance arose this Sonnet, which was, in fact, written without the least reference to any individual object, but merely to prove to myself that I could, if I thought fit, write in a strain that poets have been fond of. On the 14th of February in the same year, my daughter, in a sportive mood, sent it as a Valentine under a fictitious name to her cousin C. W.

232. * *Sonnet xxvi.*

‘ Haydon ! let worthier judges,’ &c.

This Sonnet, though said to be written on seeing the portrait of Napoleon, was in fact composed some time after, extempore, in Rydal Mount. [In pencil—But it was said in prose in Haydon’s studio, for I was present : relate the facts and why it was versified.]

233. * *Sonnet xxvii.*

‘ A poet!—He hath put,’ &c.

I was impelled to write this Sonnet by the disgusting frequency with which the word *artistical*, imported with other impertinencies from the Germans, is employed by writers of the present day. For ‘ artistical’ let them substitute ‘ artificial,’ and the poetry written on this system, both at home and abroad, will be, for the most part, much better characterised.

234. * *Sonnet xxviii.*

‘ The most alluring clouds,’ &c.

Hundreds of times have I seen hanging about and above the Vale of Rydal, clouds that might have given birth to this Sonnet ;

which was thrown off, on the impulse of the moment, one evening when I was returning home from the favourite walk of ours along the Rotha, under Loughrigg.

235. * *Sonnet xxix.*

'By Art's bold privilege,' &c.

This was composed while I was ascending Helvelyn in company with my daughter and her husband. She was on horseback, and rode to the very top of the hill without once dismounting: a feat which it was scarcely possible to perform except during a season of dry weather, and a guide with whom we fell in on the mountain told us he believed it had never been accomplished before by any one.

236. * *Sonnet xxxii.*

'All praise the likeness,' &c.

The picture which gave occasion to this and the following Sonnet was from the pencil of Miss M. Gillies, who resided for several weeks under our roof at Rydal Mount.

237. * *Sonnet xxxvi.*

'Oh, what a wreck,' &c.

The sad condition of poor Mrs. Southey put me upon writing this. It has afforded comfort to many persons whose friends have been similarly affected.

238. * *Sonnet xxxvii.*

'Intent on gathering wool,' &c.

Suggested by a conversation with Miss F., who along with her sister had during their childhood found much delight in such gatherings for the purpose here alluded to.

239. *Sonnet xlII.*

Wansfel.

The Hill that rises to the south-east above Ambleside.

240. *Sonnet xlIII.*

———'a little rural town.'

Ambleside.

VOL. III.

F

VIII. MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND, 1803.

241. * *Setting out.*

Mr. Coleridge, my sister, and myself started together from Town-End, to make a tour in Scotland, August [14th]. Poor Coleridge was at that time in bad spirits, and somewhat too much in love with his own dejection, and he departed from us, as is recorded in my sister's Journal, soon after we left Loch Lomond. The verses that stand foremost among these memorials were not actually written for the occasion, but transplanted from my Epistle to Sir G. Beaumont.

242. * *To the Sons of Burns after visiting the Grave of their Father.* [iv.]

See, in connection with these verses, two other poems upon Burns, one composed actually at the time, and the other, though then felt, not put into words till several years afterwards [viz. 'At the Grave of Burns, 1803, Seven Years after his Death [ii.] ;' and 'Thoughts suggested the Day following, on the Banks of Nith, near the Poet's Residence.' [iii.]] Another Note in I. F. mss. is nearly the same as this : viz. To be printed among the Poems relating to my first Tour in Scotland : for illustrations see my Sister's Journal. It may be proper to add that the second of these pieces, though *felt* at the time, was not composed till many years after].

243. * *Ellen Irwin, or the Braes of Kirtle.* [v.]

It may be worth while to observe, that as there are Scotch poems on this subject, in the simple ballad strain, I thought it would be both presumptuous and superfluous to attempt treating it in the same way ; and accordingly, I chose a construction of stanza quite new in our language ; in fact, the same as that of Bürger's 'Leonora,' except that the first and third lines do not in my stanzas rhyme. At the outset, I threw out a classical image, to prepare the reader for the style in which I meant to treat the story, and so to preclude all comparison. [Foot-note.—The Kirtle is a river in the southern part of Scotland, on the banks of which the events here related took place.]

244. * *To a Highland Girl.* [vi.]

This delightful creature, and her demeanour, are particularly described in my sister's Journal. The sort of prophecy with which the verses conclude has, through God's goodness, been realised; and now, approaching the close of my seventy-third year, I have a most vivid remembrance of her, and the beautiful objects with which she was surrounded. She is alluded to in the poem of 'The Three Cottage Girls,' among my continental memorials. In illustration of this class of poems, I have scarcely anything to say beyond what is anticipated in my sister's faithful and admirable Journal.

245. *Stepping Westward.* [viii.]

While my fellow-traveller and I were walking by the side of Loch Ketterine [Katrine] one fine evening after sunset, in our road to a Hut where, in the course of our Tour, we had been hospitably entertained some weeks before, we met, in one of the loneliest parts of that solitary region, two well-dressed women, one of whom said to us, by way of greeting, 'What, you are stepping westward ?'

246. * *Address to Kilchurn Castle.* [x.]

The first three lines were thrown off at the moment I first caught sight of the ruin from a small eminence by the wayside; the rest was added many years after. [Foot-note.—The tradition is that the Castle was built by a Lady during the absence of her Lord in Palestine.]

247. * *Rob Roy's Grave.* [xi.]

I have since been told that I was misinformed as to the burial-place of Rob Roy; if so, I may plead in excuse that I wrote on apparently good authority, namely, that of a well-educated lady, who lived at the head of the Lake, within a mile, or less, of the point indicated as containing the remains of one so famous in that neighbourhood. [Note prefixed.—The history of Rob Roy is sufficiently known; his grave is near the head of Loch Ketterine, in one of those small pinfold-like burial-grounds, of neglected and desolate appearance, which the traveller meets with in the Highlands of Scotland.]

248.* *Sonnet composed at —— Castle, 1803.* [xii.]

The castle here mentioned was Nidpath, near Peebles. The person alluded to was the then Duke of Queensberry. The fact was told me by Walter Scott.

249. *Yarrow Unvisited.* [xiii.]

See the various Poems the scene of which is laid upon the banks of the Yarrow; in particular the exquisite Ballad of Hamilton beginning

‘Busk ye, busk ye, my bonnie, bonnie Bride,
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow.’

250. *The Matron of Jedborough [Jedburgh] and her Husband.*

[xv.]

At Jedborough, my companion and I went into private lodgings for a few days; and the following Verses were called forth by the character and domestic situation of our Hostess.

251.* *Sonnet, ‘Fly, some kind Harbinger.’* [xvi.]

This was actually composed the last day of our tour, between Dalston and Grasmere.

252.* *The Blind Highland Boy.* [xvii.]

The story was told me by George Mackreth, for many years parish-clerk of Grasmere. He had been an eye-witness of the occurrence. The vessel in reality was a washing-tub, which the little fellow had met with on the shore of the loch. [Appended Note.—It is recorded in Dampier’s *Voyages* that a boy, son of the captain of a man-of-war, seated himself in a turtle-shell and floated in it from the shore to his father’s ship, which lay at anchor at the distance of half a mile. In deference to the opinion of a friend, I have substituted such a shell for the less elegant vessel in which my blind Voyager did actually intrust himself to the dangerous current of Loch Leven, as was related to me by an eye-witness.]

IX. MEMORIALS OF A SECOND TOUR IN SCOTLAND, 1814.

253.* *Suggested by a beautiful Ruin upon one of the islands of Loch Lomond: a place chosen for the retreat of a solitary individual, from whom this Habitation acquired the name of the Brownie's Cell.* [I.]

In this tour my wife and her sister Sara were my companions. The account of the Brownie's Cell, and the Brownies, was given me by a man we met with on the banks of Loch Lomond, a little above Tarbert, and in front of a huge mass of rock by the side of which, we were told, preachings were often held in the open air. The place is quite a solitude, and the surrounding scenery very striking. How much is it to be regretted that, instead of writing such poems as the 'Holy Fair,' and others in which the religious observances of his country are treated with so much levity, and too often with indecency, Burns had not employed his genius in describing religion under the serious and affecting aspects it must so frequently take.

254.* *Composed at Corra Linn, in sight of Wallace Tower.* [II.]

I had seen this celebrated waterfall twice before. But the feelings to which it had given birth were not expressed till they recurred in presence of the object on this occasion.

255.* *Effusion in the Pleasure-ground on the Banks of the Braw, near Dunkeld.* [III.]

I am not aware that this condemnatory effusion was ever seen by the owner of the place. He might be disposed to pay little attention to it; but, were it to prove otherwise, I should be glad, for the whole exhibition is distressingly puerile.

256.* *Yarrow Visited.* [IV.]

As mentioned in my verses on the death of the Ettrick Shepherd, my first visit to Yarrow was in his company. We had lodged the night before at Traquhair, where Hogg had joined us, and also Dr. Anderson, the editor of the British Poets, who was on a visit at the Manse. Dr. A. walked with us till we came

in view of the vale of Yarrow, and being advanced in life he then turned back. The old man was passionately fond of poetry, though with not much of a discriminating judgment, as the volumes he edited sufficiently shew. But I was much pleased to meet with him and to acknowledge my obligation to his Collection, which had been my brother John's companion in more than one voyage to India, and which he gave me before his departure from Grasmere never to return. Through these volumes I became first familiar with Chaucer; and so little money had I then to spare for books, that, in all probability, but for this same work, I should have known little of Drayton, Daniel, and other distinguished poets of the Elizabethan age and their immediate successors, till a much later period of my life. I am glad to record this, not for any importance of its own, but as a tribute of gratitude to this simple-hearted old man, whom I never again had the pleasure of meeting. I seldom read or think of this poem without regretting that my dear sister was not of the party, as she would have had so much delight in recalling the time when, travelling together in Scotland, we declined going in search of this celebrated stream, not altogether, I will frankly confess, for the reasons assigned in the poem on the occasion.

X. POEMS DEDICATED TO NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND LIBERTY.

[HEADED IN I. F. NOTES 'SONNETS DEDICATED TO LIBERTY.]

257. *Robert Jones.*

‘Jones! as from Calais,’ &c. [Sonnet III.]

(See No. 9, Dedication to Descriptive Sketches.)

This excellent Person, one of my earliest and dearest friends, died in the year 1835. We were under-graduates together of the same year, at the same college, and companions in many a delightful ramble through his own romantic country of North Wales. Much of the latter part of his life he passed in comparative solitude; which I know was often cheered by remembrance of our youthful adventures, and of the beautiful regions which, at home and abroad, we had visited together. Our long friendship was never subject to a moment's interruption,—and,

while revising these volumes for the last time, I have been so often reminded of my loss, with a not unpleasing sadness, that I trust the Reader will excuse this passing mention of a Man who well deserves from me something more than so brief a notice. Let me only add, that during the middle part of his life he resided many years (as Incumbent of the Living) at a Parsonage in Oxfordshire, which is the subject of the seventh of the ‘Miscellaneous Sonnets,’ Part III.

258. *I grieved for Buonaparte.* [Sonnet IV.]

[Note No. 183 is repeated here.]

259. *The King of Sweden and Toussaint L’Ouverture.*

[Sonnets VII. and VIII.]

In this and a succeeding Sonnet on the same subject, let me be understood as a Poet availing himself of the situation which the King of Sweden occupied, and of the principles AVOWED IN HIS MANIFESTOS ; as laying hold of these advantages for the purpose of embodying moral truths. This remark might, perhaps, as well have been suppressed ; for to those who may be in sympathy with the course of these Poems, it will be superfluous ; and will, I fear, be thrown away upon that other class, whose besotted admiration of the intoxicated despot hereafter placed in contrast with him is the most melancholy evidence of degradation in British feeling and intellect which the times have furnished.

260. *September 1, 1802.* [Sonnet IX.]

Among the capricious acts of tyranny that disgraced these times was the chasing of all negroes from France by decree of the Government ; we had a fellow-passenger who was one of the expelled.

261. * ‘*Two Voices are there,’ &c.* [Sonnet XII.]

This was composed while pacing to and fro between the Hall of Coleorton, then rebuilding, and the principal Farm-house of the Estate, in which we lived for nine or ten months. I will here mention that the Song on the Restoration of Lord Clifford, as well as that on the Feast of Brougham Castle as mentioned [in the place], were produced on the same ground.

262. * ‘*O Friend! I know not which Way.*’ [Sonnet xiii.]

This was written immediately after my return from France to London, when I could not but be struck, as here described, with the vanity and parade of our own country, especially in great towns and cities, as contrasted with the quiet, and I may say the desolation, that the Revolution had produced in France. This must be borne in mind, or else the reader may think that in this and succeeding sonnets I have exaggerated the mischief engendered and fostered among us by undisturbed wealth.

[In pencil—Query: Sonnets relating to the expected Invasion, &c., p. 189, vol. iii. (1837) to p. 200; Ode, p. 201 to 203; Sonnets, part second, p. 204 to 215]. [After three blank pages.]

263. * *War in Spain.*

It would not be easy to conceive with what a depth of feeling I entered into the struggle carried on by the Spaniards for their deliverance from the usurped power of the French. Many times have I gone from Allan Bank, in Grasmere Vale, where we were then residing, to the top of the Raise-Gap, as it is called, so late as two o'clock in the morning, to meet the carrier bringing the newspaper from Keswick. Imperfect traces of the state of mind in which I then was may be found in my tract on the Convention of Cintra, as well as in these Sonnets.

264. * *Zaragossa.* [Sonnet xvi.]

In this sonnet I am under some obligations to one of an Italian author, to which I cannot refer.

265. * *Lines on the expected Invasion, 1803.* [Sonnet xxvi.]

To take their place among the political pieces.

266. *Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke.* [Sonnet xxvii.]

‘Danger which they fear, and honour which they understand not.’

Words in Lord Brooke’s Life of Sir Philip Sidney.

So in the ‘Thanksgiving Ode’ (vi. 10) on ‘And discipline was passion’s dire excess’ is quoted, ‘Discipline the rule whereof is passion.’

267. *The Oak of Guernica.* [Part II. Sonnet xxvi.]

The ancient oak of Guernica, says Laborde, in his account of Biscay, is a most venerable natural monument. Ferdinand and Isabella, in the year 1476, after hearing mass in the church of Santa Maria de la Antigua, repaired to this tree, under which they swore to the Biscayans to maintain their *fueros* (privileges). What other interest belongs to it in the minds of the people will appear from the following ‘Supposed Address to the Same.’

268. *Thanksgiving Ode.* [Part II. xlvi.]

Wholly unworthy of touching upon the momentous subject here treated would that Poet be, before whose eyes the present distresses under which this kingdom labours could interpose a veil sufficiently thick to hide, or even to obscure, the splendour of this great moral triumph. If I have given way to exultation, unchecked by these distresses, it might be sufficient to protect me from a charge of insensibility, should I state my own belief that the sufferings will be transitory. Upon the wisdom of a very large majority of the British nation rested that generosity which poured out the treasures of this country for the deliverance of Europe; and in the same national wisdom, presiding in time of peace over an energy not inferior to that which has been displayed in war, *they* confide who encourage a firm hope that the cup of our wealth will be gradually replenished. There will, doubtless, be no few ready to indulge in regrets and repinings; and to feed a morbid satisfaction by aggravating these burthens in imagination; in order that calamity so confidently prophesied, as it has not taken the shape which their sagacity allotted to it, may appear as grievous as possible under another. But the body of the nation will not quarrel with the gain, because it might have been purchased at a less price; and, acknowledging in these sufferings, which they feel to have been in a great degree unavoidable, a consecration of their noble efforts, they will vigorously apply themselves to remedy the evil.

Nor is it at the expense of rational patriotism, or in disregard of sound philosophy, that I have given vent to feelings tending to encourage a martial spirit in the bosoms of my countrymen, at a time when there is a general outcry against the

prevalence of these dispositions. The British army, both by its skill and valour in the field, and by the discipline which rendered it, to the inhabitants of the several countries where its operations were carried on, a protection from the violence of their own troops, has performed services that will not allow the language of gratitude and admiration to be suppressed or restrained (whatever be the temper of the public mind) through a scrupulous dread lest the tribute due to the past should prove an injurious incentive for the future. Every man deserving the name of Briton adds his voice to the chorus which extols the exploits of his countrymen, with a consciousness, at times overpowering the effort, that they transcend all praise.—But this particular sentiment, thus irresistibly excited, is not sufficient. The nation would err grievously, if she suffered the abuse which other States have made of military power to prevent her from perceiving that no people ever was or can be independent, free, or secure, much less great, in any sane application of the word, without a cultivation of military virtues. Nor let it be overlooked, that the benefits derivable from these sources are placed within the reach of Great Britain, under conditions peculiarly favourable. The same insular position which, by rendering territorial incorporation impossible, utterly precludes the desire of conquest under the most seductive shape it can assume, enables her to rely, for her defence against foreign foes, chiefly upon a species of armed force from which her own liberties have nothing to fear. Such are the privileges of her situation ; and, by permitting, they invite her to give way to the courageous instincts of human nature, and to strengthen and refine them by culture.

But some have more than insinuated that a design exists to subvert the civil character of the English people by unconstitutional applications and unnecessary increase of military power. The advisers and abettors of such a design, were it possible that it should exist, would be guilty of the most heinous crime, which, upon this planet, can be committed. Trusting that this apprehension arises from the delusive influences of an honourable jealousy, let me hope that the martial qualities which I venerate will be fostered by adhering to those good old usages which experience has sanctioned ; and by availing ourselves of new means of indisputable promise : particularly by applying, in its utmost

possible extent, that system of tuition whose master-spring is a habit of gradually enlightened subordination ;—by imparting knowledge, civil, moral, and religious, in such measure that the mind, among all classes of the community, may love, admire, and be prepared and accomplished to defend, that country under whose protection its faculties have been unfolded, and its riches acquired :—by just dealing towards all orders of the State, so that no members of it being trampled upon, courage may everywhere continue to rest immovably upon its ancient English foundation, personal self-respect ;—by adequate rewards, and permanent honours, conferred upon the deserving ;—by encouraging athletic exercises and manly sports among the peasantry of the country ;—and by especial care to provide and support institutions, in which, during a time of peace, a reasonable proportion of the youth of the country may be instructed in military science.

I have only to add, that I should feel little satisfaction in giving to the world these limited attempts to celebrate the virtues of my country, if I did not encourage a hope that a subject, which it has fallen within my province to treat only in the mass, will by other poets be illustrated in that detail which its importance calls for, and which will allow opportunities to give the merited applause to PERSONS as well as to THINGS.

The ode was published along with other pieces, now interspersed through this Volume.

269. * *Ibid.*

The first stanza of this Ode was composed almost extempore, in front of Rydal Mount before Church-time, on such a morning and precisely with such objects before my eyes as are here described. The view taken of Napoleon's character and proceedings is little in accordance with that taken by some Historians and critical philosophers. I am glad and proud of the difference, and trust that this series of Poems, infinitely below the subject as they are, will survive to counteract in unsophisticated minds the pernicious and degrading tendency of those views and doctrines that lead to the idolatry of power as power, and in that false splendour to lose sight of its real nature and constitution, as it often acts for the gratification of its possessor without reference to a beneficial end—an infirmity that has characterised men of

all ages, classes, and employments, since Nimrod became a mighty hunter before the Lord. [In pencil is the following by Mr. Quillinan—In a letter to Southey about the rhythm of this Ode Wordsworth, comparing the first paragraph of the ‘Aeneid’ with that of the ‘Jerusalem Liberated,’ says, that ‘the measure of the latter has the pace of a set of recruits shuffling to vulgar music upon a parade, and receiving from the adjutant or drill-sergeant the command to halt at every twenty steps.’ Mr. W. had no ear for instrumental music; or he would not have applied this vulgar sarcasm to military march-music. Besides, awkward recruits are never drilled to music at all. The Band on parade plays to perfectly-drilled troops. *Ne sutor ultra crepidam.*]

270. *Spenser.* [Part II. Sonnet XLIII.]

‘Assoiled from all encumbrance of our time.’

‘From all this world’s encumbrance did himself asoil.’

XI. MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT, 1820.

271. * *Introductory Remarks.*

I set out in company with my wife and sister, and Mr. and Mrs. Monkhouse, then just married, and Miss Horrocks. These two ladies, sisters, we left at Berne, while Mr. Monkhouse took the opportunity of making an excursion with us among the Alps, as far as Milan. Mr. H. C. Robinson joined us at Lucerne, and when this ramble was completed we rejoined at Geneva the two ladies we had left at Berne, and proceeded to Paris, where Mr. Monkhouse and H. C. R. left us, and where we spent five weeks, of which there is not a record in these poems.

272. *The Fishwomen of Calais.* [I.]

If in this Sonnet [I. of ‘Memorials of a Tour on the Continent,’ 1820] I should seem to have borne a little hard upon the personal appearance of the worthy Poissardes of Calais, let me take shelter under the authority of my lamented friend, the late Sir George Beaumont. He, a most accurate observer, used to say of them, that their features and countenances seemed to

have conformed to those of the creatures they dealt in; at all events the resemblance was striking.

273. * *Incident at Bruges.* [iv.]

This occurred at Bruges in the year 1828. Mr. Coleridge, my daughter, and I, made a tour together in Flanders, upon the Rhine, and returned by Holland. Dora and I, while taking a walk along a retired part of the town, heard the voice as here described, and were afterwards informed that it was a convent, in which were many English. We were both much touched, I might say affected, and Dora moved as appears in the verses.

274. *Between Namur and Liege.* [vi.]

The scenery on the Meuse pleases me more, upon the whole, than that of the Rhine, though the river itself is much inferior in grandeur. The rocks, both in form and colour, especially between Namur and Liege, surpass any upon the Rhine, though they are in several places disfigured by quarries, whence stones were taken for the new fortifications. This is much to be regretted, for they are useless, and the scars will remain, perhaps, for thousands of years. A like injury to a still greater degree has been inflicted, in my memory, upon the beautiful rocks at Clifton, on the banks of the Avon. There is probably in existence a very long letter of mine to Sir Uvedale Price, in which was given a description of the landscapes on the Meuse as compared with those on the Rhine.

Details in the spirit of these sonnets are given both in Mary's Journal and my sister's; and the reperusal of them has strengthened a wish long entertained, that somebody would put together, as in one work, the notes contained in them, omitting particulars that were written down merely to aid our memory, and bringing the whole into as small a compass as is consistent with the general interests belonging to the scenes, circumstances, and objects touched on by each writer.

275. ' *Miserere Domine.*' [x.]

See the beautiful song on Mr. Coleridge's Tragedy, 'The Remorse.' Why is the harp of Quantock silent?

276. *The Danube.* [xi.]

'Not, like his great Compeers, indignantly
Doth Danube spring to life!'

Before this quarter of the Black Forest was inhabited, the source of the Danube might have suggested some of those sublime images which Armstrong has so finely described ; at present, the contrast is most striking. The Spring appears in a spacious stone Basin in front of a Ducal palace, with a pleasure-ground opposite ; then, passing under the pavement, takes the form of a little, clear, bright, black, vigorous rill, barely wide enough to tempt the agility of a child five years old to leap over it,—and entering the garden, it joins, after a course of a few hundred yards, a stream much more considerable than itself. The *copiousness* of the spring at *Doneschingen* must have procured for it the honour of being named the Source of the Danube.

277. *The Staub-bach.* [xii.]

'The Staub-bach' is a narrow Stream, which, after a long course on the heights, comes to the sharp edge of a somewhat overhanging precipice, overleaps it with a bound, and, after a fall of 930 feet, forms again a rivulet. The vocal powers of these musical Beggars may seem to be exaggerated ; but this wild and savage air was utterly unlike any sounds I had ever heard ; the notes reached me from a distance, and on what occasion they were sung I could not guess, only they seemed to belong, in some way or other, to the Waterfall—and reminded me of religious services chanted to Streams and Fountains in Pagan times. Mr. Southey has thus accurately characterised the peculiarity of this music : 'While we were at the Waterfall, some half-score peasants, chiefly women and girls, assembled just out of reach of the Spring, and set up—surely, the wildest chorus that ever was heard by human ears,—a song not of articulate sounds, but in which the voice was used as a mere instrument of music, more flexible than any which art could produce,—sweet, powerful, and thrilling beyond description.'—See Notes to 'A Tale of Paraguay.'

278. *Memorial near the Outlet of the Lake of Thun.* [xiv.]

Dem
Andenken
Meines Freundes
ALOYS REDING
MDCCCXVIII.

Aloys Reding, it will be remembered, was Captain-General of the Swiss Forces, which with a courage and perseverance worthy of the cause, opposed the flagitious and too successful attempt of Buonaparte to subjugate their country.

279. *Engelberg.* [xviii.]

The Convent whose site was pointed out, according to tradition, in this manner, is seated at its base. The architecture of the building is unimpressive, but the situation is worthy of the honour which the imagination of the mountaineers has conferred upon it.

280. *Our Lady of the Snow.* [xix.]

Mount Righi.

281. *Effusion in presence of the painted Tower of Tell at Altorf.*
[xx.]

This Tower stands upon the spot where grew the Linden Tree against which his Son is said to have been placed, when the Father's archery was put to proof under circumstances so famous in Swiss Story.

282. *The Town of Schwytz.* [xxi.]

Nearly 500 years (says Ebel, speaking of the French Invasion) had elapsed, when, for the first time, foreign soldiers were seen upon the frontiers of this small Canton, to impose upon it the laws of their governors.

283. *The Church of San Salvador, seen from the Lake of Lugano.* [xxiv.]

This Church was almost destroyed by lightning a few years ago, but the altar and the image of the Patron Saint were untouched. The Mount, upon the summit of which the Church is

built, stands amid the intricacies of the Lake of Lugano ; and is, from a hundred points of view, its principal ornament, rising to the height of 2000 feet, and, on one side, nearly perpendicular. The ascent is toilsome ; but the traveller who performs it will be amply rewarded. Splendid fertility, rich woods and dazzling waters, seclusion and confinement of view contrasted with sea-like extent of plain fading into the sky ; and this again, in an opposite quarter, with an horizon of the loftiest and boldest Alps —unite in composing a prospect more diversified by magnificence, beauty, and sublimity, than perhaps any other point in Europe, of so inconsiderable an elevation, commands.

284. *Foot-note on lines 31-36.*

‘ He, too, of battle martyrs chief!
 Who, to recal his daunted peers,
 For victory shaped an open space,
 By gathering with a wide embrace,
 Into his single breast, a sheaf
 Of fatal Austrian spears.’

Arnold Winkelried, at the battle of Sampach, broke an Austrian phalanx in this manner.

285. ‘*The Last Supper*’ of Leonardo da Vinci. [xxvi.]

‘ Though searching damps and many an envious flaw
 Have marred this Work.’

This picture of the Last Supper has not only been grievously injured by time, but the greatest part of it, if not the whole, is said to have been retouched, or painted over again. These niceties may be left to connoisseurs,—I speak of it as I felt. The copy exhibited in London some years ago, and the engraving by Morghen, are both admirable ; but in the original is a power which neither of those works has attained, or even approached.

286. *Statues on Milan Cathedral.* [xxvii.]

‘ Of figures human and divine.’

The Statues ranged round the spire and along the roof of the Cathedral of Milan, have been found fault with by persons whose exclusive taste is unfortunate for themselves. It is true that the same expense and labour, judiciously directed to purposes more

strictly architectural, might have much heightened the general effect of the building; for, seen from the ground, the Statues appear diminutive. But the *coup-d'œil*, from the best point of view, which is half way up the spire, must strike an unprejudiced person with admiration; and surely the selection and arrangement of the Figures is exquisitely fitted to support the religion of the country in the imaginations and feelings of the spectator. It was with great pleasure that I saw, during the two ascents which we made, several children, of different ages, tripping up and down the slender spire, and pausing to look around them, with feelings much more animated than could have been derived from these or the finest works of art, if placed within easy reach.—Remember also that you have the Alps on one side, and on the other the Apennines, with the plain of Lombardy between!

287. *A Religious Procession.* [xxxii.]

‘ Still, with those white-robed Shapes—a living Stream,
The glacier pillars join in solemn guise.’

This Procession is a part of the sacramental service performed once a month. In the valley of Engleberg we had the good fortune to be present at the *Grand Festival* of the Virgin—but the Procession on that day, though consisting of upwards of 1000 persons, assembled from all the branches of the sequestered valley, was much less striking (notwithstanding the sublimity of the surrounding scenery): it wanted both the simplicity of the other and the accompaniment of the Glacier-columns, whose sisterly resemblance to the *moving Figures* gave it a most beautiful and solemn peculiarity.

288. *Elegiac Stanzas.* [xxxiii.]

The lamented Youth whose untimely death gave occasion to these elegiac verses was Frederick William Goddard, from Boston in North America. He was in his twentieth year, and had resided for some time with a clergyman in the neighbourhood of Geneva for the completion of his education. Accompanied by a fellow-pupil, a native of Scotland, he had just set out on a Swiss tour when it was his misfortune to fall in with a friend of mine who was hastening to join our party. The travellers, after spending a day together on the road from Berne and at Soleure, took leave of each other at night, the young

men having intended to proceed directly to Zurich. But early in the morning my friend found his new acquaintances, who were informed of the object of his journey, and the friends he was in pursuit of, equipped to accompany him. We met at Lucerne the succeeding evening, and Mr. G. and his fellow-student became in consequence our travelling companions for a couple of days. We ascended the Righi together; and, after contemplating the sunrise from that noble mountain, we separated at an hour and on a spot well suited to the parting of those who were to meet no more. Our party descended through the valley of our Lady of the Snow, and our late companions, to Art. We had hoped to meet in a few weeks at Geneva; but on the third succeeding day (on the 21st of August) Mr. Goddard perished, being overset in a boat while crossing the lake of Zurich. His companion saved himself by swimming, and was hospitably received in the mansion of a Swiss gentleman (M. Keller) situated on the eastern coast of the lake. The corpse of poor Goddard was cast ashore on the estate of the same gentleman, who generously performed all the rites of hospitality which could be rendered to the dead as well as to the living. He caused a handsome mural monument to be erected in the church of Küsnacht, which records the premature fate of the young American, and on the shores too of the lake the traveller may read an inscription pointing out the spot where the body was deposited by the waves.

289. *Mount Righi* (foot-note).

— ‘the dread summit of the Queen
Of Mountains.’

Mount Righi—Regina Montium.

290. *The Tower of Caligula.* [xxxv.]

Near the town of Boulogne, and overhanging the beach, are the remains of a tower which bears the name of Caligula, who here terminated his western expedition, of which these sea-shells were the boasted spoils. And at no great distance from these ruins, Buonaparte, standing upon a mound of earth, harangued his ‘Army of England,’ reminding them of the exploits of Cæsar, and pointing towards the white cliffs, upon which their standards *were to float.* He recommended also a

subscription to be raised among the Soldiery to erect on that ground, in memory of the foundation of the ‘Legion of Honour,’ a Column—which was not completed at the time we were there.

291. *Herds of Cattle.* [xxxvi.]

‘We mark majestic herds of cattle, free
To ruminate.’

This is a most grateful sight for an Englishman returning to his native land. Every where one misses in the cultivated grounds abroad, the animated and soothing accompaniment of animals ranging and selecting their own food at will.

292. *The Forks.* [‘Desultory Stanzas,’ l. 37.]

Les Fourches, the point at which the two chains of mountains part, that enclose the Valais, which terminates at St. Maurice.

292^a. *The Landenberg.* [Ibid. ll. 49-51.]

—‘ye that occupy
Your Council-seats beneath the open sky,
On Sarnen’s Mount.’

Sarnen, one of the two capitals of the Canton of Unterwalden; the spot here alluded to is close to the town, and is called the Landenberg, from the tyrant of that name, whose château formerly stood there. On the 1st of January 1308, the great day which the confederated Heroes had chosen for the deliverance of their country, all the castles of the Governors were taken by force or stratagem; and the Tyrants themselves conducted, with their creatures, to the frontiers, after having witnessed the destruction of their strong-holds. From that time the Landenberg has been the place where the Legislators of this division of the Canton assemble. The site, which is well described by Ebel, is one of the most beautiful in Switzerland.

293. *Pictures in Bridges of Switzerland.* [Ibid. l. 56.]

‘Calls me to pace her honoured Bridge.’

The bridges of Lucerne are roofed, and open at the sides, so that the passenger has, at the same time, the benefit of shade, and a view of the magnificent country. The pictures

are attached to the rafters; those from Scripture History, on the Cathedral-bridge, amount, according to my notes, to 240. Subjects from the Old Testament face the passenger as he goes towards the Cathedral, and those from the New as he returns. The pictures on these bridges, as well as those in most other parts of Switzerland, are not to be spoken of as works of art; but they are instruments admirably answering the purpose for which they were designed.

294. * *At Dover.* [xxxvii.]

For the impressions on which this Sonnet turns I am indebted to the experience of my daughter during her residence at Dover with our dear friend Miss Fenwick.

XII. MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN ITALY, 1837.

295. * *Introductory Remarks.*

During my whole life I had felt a strong desire to visit Rome and the other celebrated cities and regions of Italy, but did not think myself justified in incurring the necessary expense till I received from Mr. Moxon, the publisher of a large edition of my poems, a sum sufficient to enable me to gratify my wish without encroaching upon what I considered due to my family. My excellent friend H. C. Robinson readily consented to accompany me, and in March 1837 we set off from London, to which we returned in August—earlier than my companion wished, or I should myself have desired, had I been, like him, a bachelor. These Memorials of that Tour touch upon but a very few of the places and objects that interested me; and in what they do advert to are for the most part much slighter than I could wish. More particularly do I regret that there is no notice in them of the south of France, nor of the Roman antiquities abounding in that district; especially of the Pont de Degard, which, together with its situation, impressed me full as much as any remains of Roman architecture to be found in Italy. Then there was Vaucluse, with its fountain, its Petrarch, its rocks [query—roses?] of all seasons, its small plots of lawn in their first vernal freshness, and the blossoms of the peach and other

trees embellishing the scene on every side. The beauty of the stream also called forcibly for the expression of sympathy from one who from his childhood had studied the brooks and torrents of his native mountains. Between two and three hours did I run about, climbing the steep and rugged craggs, from whose base the water of Vaucluse breaks forth. ‘Has Laura’s lover,’ often said I to myself, ‘ever sat down upon this stone? Or has his foot ever pressed that turf?’ Some, especially of the female sex, could have felt sure of it; my answer was (impute it to my years), ‘I fear, not.’ Is it not in fact obvious that many of his love-verses must have flowed, I do not say from a wish to display his own talent, but from a habit of exercising his intellect in that way, rather than from an impulse of his heart? It is otherwise with his Lyrical Poems, and particularly with the one upon the degradation of his country. There he pours out his reproaches, lamentations, and aspirations like an ardent and sincere patriot. But enough; it is time to turn to my own effusions, such as they are.

296. *Ibid.*

The Tour, of which the following Poems are very inadequate remembrances, was shortened by report, too well founded, of the prevalence of cholera at Naples. To make some amends for what was reluctantly left unseen in the south of Italy, we visited the Tuscan Sanctuaries among the Apennines, and the principal Italian Lakes among the Alps. Neither of those lakes, nor of Venice, is there any notice in these poems, chiefly because I have touched upon them elsewhere. See in particular ‘Descriptive Sketches,’ ‘Memorials of a Tour on the Continent in 1820,’ and a Sonnet upon the extinction of the Venetian Republic.

297. * *Musings at Aquapendente, April 1837. [I.]*

The following note refers to Sir W. Scott:

‘Had his sunk eye kindled at those dear words
That spake of Bards and Minstrels’ (ll. 60-1).

His, Sir W. Scott’s, eye *did* in fact kindle at them, for the lines ‘Places forsaken now,’ and the two that follow, were adopted from a poem of mine, which nearly forty years ago was in part read to him, and he never forgot them.

‘Old Helvellyn’s brow,
Where once together in his day of strength
We stood rejoicing’ (ll. 62-4).

Sir Hy. Davy was with us at the time. We had ascended from Paterdale, and I could not but admire the vigour with which Scott scrambled along that horn of the mountain called ‘Striding Edge.’ Our progress was necessarily slow, and beguiled by Scott’s telling many stories and amusing anecdotes, as was his custom. Sir H. Davy would have probably been better pleased if other topics had occasionally been interspersed and some discussion entered upon; at all events, he did not remain with us long at the top of the mountain, but left us to find our way down its steep side together into the vale of Grasmere, where at my cottage Mrs. Scott was to meet us at dinner. He said :

‘When I am there, although ’tis fair,
’Twill be another Yarrow.’

See among these Notes the one upon Yarrow Revisited. [In the printed Notes there is the following farther reference to the touching quotation by Scott—These words were quoted to me from ‘Yarrow Unvisited’ by Sir Walter Scott, when I visited him at Abbotsford, a day or two before his departure for Italy; and the affecting condition in which he was when he looked upon Rome from the Janicular Mount was reported to me by a lady who had the honour of conducting him thither.]

298.

‘He stood

*A few short steps, painful they were, apart
From Tasso’s convent-haven and retired grave’ (ll. 83-5).*

This, though introduced here, I did not know till it was told me at Rome by Miss Mackenzie of Seaforth, a lady whose friendly attentions, during my residence at Rome, I have gratefully acknowledged with expressions of sincere regret that she is no more. Miss M. told me that she had accompanied Sir Walter to the Janicular Mount, and, after showing him the grave of Tasso in the church upon the top, and a mural monument there erected to his memory, they left the church, and stood together on the brow of the hill overlooking the city of Rome. His daughter Anne was with them, and she, naturally desirous, for the sake of Miss Mackenzie especially, to have some expression of pleasure from her father, half reproached

him for showing nothing of that kind either by his looks or voice. ‘How can I,’ replied he, ‘having only one leg to stand upon, and that in extreme pain?’ so that the prophecy was more than fulfilled.

299. ‘*Over waves rough and deep*’ (line 122).

We took boat near the lighthouse at the point of the right horn of the bay, which makes a sort of natural port for Genoa; but the wind was high, and the waves long and rough, so that I did not feel quite recompensed by the view of the city, splendid as it was, for the danger apparently incurred. The boatman (I had only one) encouraged me, saying, we were quite safe; but I was not a little glad when we gained the shore, though Shelley and Byron—one of them at least who seemed to have courted agitation from every quarter—would have probably rejoiced in such a situation. More than once, I believe, were they both in extreme danger even on the Lake of Geneva. Every man, however, has his fears of some kind or other, and, no doubt, they had theirs. Of all men whom I have ever known, Coleridge had the most of passive courage in bodily trial, but no one was so easily cowed when moral firmness was required in miscellaneous conversation or in the daily intercourse of social life.

300. ‘*How lovely—didst thou appear, Savona*’ (ll. 209-11).

There is not a single bay along this beautiful coast that might not raise in a traveller a wish to take up his abode there; each as it succeeds seems more inviting than the other; but the desolated convent on the cliff in the bay of Savona struck my fancy most; and had I, for the sake of my own health or of that of a dear friend, or any other cause, been desirous of a residence abroad, I should have let my thoughts loose upon a scheme of turning some part of this building into a habitation, provided as far as might be with English comforts. There is close by it a row, or avenue (I forget which), of tall cypresses. I could not forbear saying to myself, ‘What a sweet family walk, or one for lonely musings, would be found under the shade!’ but there probably the trees remain little noticed and seldom enjoyed.

301. ‘*This flowering Broom’s dear Neighbourhood*’ (l. 378).

The Broom is a great ornament through the months of March and April to the vales and hills of the Apennines, in the wild part of which it blows in the utmost profusion, and of course successively at different elevations as the season advances. It surpasses ours in beauty and fragrance ; but, speaking from my own limited observation only, I cannot affirm the same of several of their wild Spring flowers, the primroses in particular, which I saw not unfrequently but thinly scattered and languishing as compared with ours.

302. *The Religious Movement in the English Church.*

In the printed Notes there is the following on Aquapendente : ‘It would be ungenerous not to advert to the religious movement that, since the composition of these verses in 1837, has made itself felt, more or less strongly, throughout the English Church ; a movement that takes for its first principle a devout deference to the voice of Christian antiquity. It is not my office to pass judgment on questions of theological detail ; but my own repugnance to the spirit and system of Romanism has been so repeatedly, and I trust feelingly, expressed that I shall not be suspected of a leaning that way, if I do not join in the grave charges, thrown out, perhaps, in the heat of controversy, against the learned and pious men to whose labours I allude. I speak apart from controversy, but with a strong faith in the moral temper which would elevate the present by doing reverence to the past. I would draw cheerful auguries for the English Church from this movement as likely to restore among us a tone of piety more earnest and real than that produced by the mere formalities of the understanding, refusing, in a degree which I cannot but lament, that its own temper and judgment shall be controlled by those of antiquity.’ From the I. F. mss. we learn that the preceding note was written by the Rev. F. W. Faber, D.D., as thus : ‘The Note at the close of the poem upon the Oxford movement was intrusted to my friend Mr. Frederick Faber. I told him what I wished to be said, and begged that as he was intimately acquainted with several of the Leaders of it, he would express my thought in the way least likely to be

taken amiss by them. Much of the work they are undertaking was grievously wanted, and God grant their endeavours may continue to prosper as they have done.'

302^a. * 'The Pine-tree of Monte Mario.' [II.]

Rescued by Sir G. Beaumont from destruction. Sir G. Beaumont told me that when he first visited Italy, pine-trees of this species abounded; but that on his return thither, which was more than thirty years after, they had disappeared from many places where he had been accustomed to admire them, and had become rare all over the country, especially in and about Rome. Several Roman villas have within these few years passed into the hands of foreigners, who, I observed with pleasure, have taken care to plant this tree, which in course of years will become a great ornament to the city and to the general landscape.

May I venture to add here, that having ascended the Monte Mario I could not resist embracing the trunk of this interesting monument of my departed friend's feelings for the beauties of nature and the power of that art which he loved so much and in the practice of which he was so distinguished.

[Among the printed Notes is the following—Within a couple of hours of my arrival at Rome, I saw from Monte Pincio the Pine-tree as described in the Sonnet; and while expressing admiration at the beauty of its appearance, I was told by an acquaintance of my fellow-traveller, who happened to join us at the moment, that a price had been paid for it by the late Sir G. Beaumont, upon condition that the proprietor should not act upon his known intention of cutting it down.]

303. 'Is this, ye gods.' [III. l. 1.]

Sight is at first a sad enemy to imagination, and to those pleasures belonging to old times with which some exertions of that power will always mingle. Nothing perhaps brings this truth home to the feelings more than the city of Rome, not so much in respect to the impression made at the moment when it is first seen and looked at as a whole, for then the imagination may be invigorated, and the mind's eye quickened to perceive as much as that of the imagination; but when par-

ticular spots or objects are sought out, disappointment is, I believe, invariably felt. Ability to recover from this disappointment will exist in proportion to knowledge, and the power of the mind to reconstruct out of fragments and parts, and to make details in the present subservient to more adequate comprehension of the past.

304. ‘At Rome.’

‘They who have seen the noble Roman’s scorn.’ [vii. l. 1.]

I have a private interest in this sonnet, for I doubt whether it would ever have been written, but for the lively picture given me by Anna Ricketts of what they had witnessed of the indignation and sorrow expressed by some Italian noblemen of their acquaintance upon the surrender, which circumstances had obliged them to make, of the best portion of their family mansions to strangers.

305. * *At Albano.* [ix.]

This sonnet is founded on simple fact, and was written to enlarge, if possible, the views of those who can see nothing but evil in the intercessions countenanced by the Church of Rome. That they are in many respects lamentably pernicious must be acknowledged ; but, on the other hand, they who reflect while they see and observe cannot but be struck with instances which will prove that it is a great error to condemn in all cases such mediation, as purely idolatrous. This remark bears with especial force upon addresses to the Virgin.

306. * *Cuckoo at Laverna.* [xiv.]

May 25th, 1837. Among a thousand delightful feelings connected in my mind with the voice of the cuckoo, there is a personal one which is rather melancholy. I was first convinced that age had rather dulled my hearing, by not being able to catch the sound at the same distance as the younger companions of my walks ; and of this failure I had proof upon the occasion that suggested these verses. I did not hear the sound till Mr. Robinson had twice or thrice directed my attention to it.

307. *Camaldoli.* [xv.]

This famous sanctuary was the original establishment of Saint Romualdo, (or Rumwald, as our ancestors saxonised the name) in the 11th century, the ground (campo) being given by a Count Maldo. The Camaldolensi, however, have spread wide as a branch of Benedictines, and may therefore be classed among the *gentlemen* of the monastic orders. The society comprehends two orders, monks and hermits; symbolised by their arms, two doves drinking out of the same cup. The monastery in which the monks here reside is beautifully situated, but a large unattractive edifice, not unlike a factory. The hermitage is placed in a loftier and wilder region of the forest. It comprehends between 20 and 30 distinct residences, each including for its single hermit an inclosed piece of ground and three very small apartments. There are days of indulgence when the hermit may quit his cell, and when old age arrives, he descends from the mountain and takes his abode among the monks.

My companion had, in the year 1831, fallen in with the monk, the subject of these two sonnets, who showed him his abode among the hermits. It is from him that I received the following particulars. He was then about 40 years of age, but his appearance was that of an older man. He had been a painter by profession, but on taking orders changed his name from Santi to Raffaello, perhaps with an unconscious reference as well to the great Sanzio d'Urbino as to the archangel. He assured my friend that he had been 13 years in the hermitage and had never known melancholy or ennui. In the little recess for study and prayer, there was a small collection of books. 'I read only,' said he, 'books of asceticism and mystical theology.' On being asked the names of the most famous mystics, he enumerated *Scaramelli*, *San Giovanni della Croce*, *St. Dionysius the Areopagite* (supposing the work which bears his name to be really his), and with peculiar emphasis *Ricardo di San Vittori*. The works of *Saint Theresa* are also in high repute among ascetics. These names may interest some of my readers.

We heard that Raffaello was then living in the convent; my friend sought in vain to renew his acquaintance with him. It was probably a day of seclusion. The reader will perceive that

these sonnets were supposed to be written when he was a young man.

308. *Monk-visitors of Camaldoli.*

'What aim had they the pair of Monks?' (xvii. l. 1.)

In justice to the Benedictines of Camaldoli, by whom strangers are so hospitably entertained, I feel obliged to notice, that I saw among them no other figures at all resembling, in size and complexion, the two monks described in this Sonnet. What was their office, or the motive which brought them to this place of mortification, which they could not have approached without being carried in this or some other way, a feeling of delicacy prevented me from inquiring. An account has before been given of the hermitage they were about to enter. It was visited by us towards the end of the month of May; yet snow was lying thick under the pine-trees, within a few yards of the gate.

309. * *At Vallombrosa.* [xviii.]

I must confess, though of course I did not acknowledge it in the few lines I wrote in the strangers' book kept at the Convent, that I was somewhat disappointed at Vallombrosa. I had expected, as the name implies, a deep and narrow valley, overshadowed by enclosing hills: but the spot where the convent stands is in fact not a valley at all, but a cove or crescent open to an extensive prospect. In the book before mentioned I read the notice in the English language, that if any one would ascend the steep ground above the convent, and wander over it, he would be abundantly rewarded by magnificent views. I had not time to act upon the recommendation, and only went with my young guide to a point, nearly on a level with the site of the convent, that overlooks the Vale of Arno for some leagues.

To praise great and good men has ever been deemed one of the worthiest employments of poetry; but the objects of admiration vary so much with time and circumstances, and the noblest of mankind have been found, when intimately known, to be of characters so imperfect, that no eulogist can find a subject which he will venture upon with the animation necessary to create sympathy, unless he confines himself to a particular act, or he takes something of a one-sided view of the person he is disposed to celebrate. This is a melancholy truth, and affords a strong

reason for the poetic mind being chiefly exercised in works of fiction. The poet can then follow wherever the spirit of admiration leads him, unchecked by such suggestions as will be too apt to cross his way if all that he is prompted to utter is to be tested by fact. Something in this spirit I have written in the note attached to the Sonnet on the King of Sweden ; and many will think that in this poem, and elsewhere, I have spoken of the author of ‘Paradise Lost’ in a strain of panegyric scarcely justifiable by the tenour of some of his opinions, whether theological or political, and by the temper he carried into public affairs, in which, unfortunately for his genius, he was so much concerned.

[Among the printed Notes is this—The name of Milton is pleasingly connected with Vallombrosa in many ways. The pride with which the Monk, without any previous question from me, pointed out his residence, I shall not readily forget. It may be proper here to defend the Poet from a charge which has been brought against him, in respect to the passage in ‘Paradise Lost’ where this place is mentioned. It is said, that he has erred in speaking of the trees there being deciduous, whereas they are, in fact, pines. The fault-finders are themselves mistaken : the natural woods of the region of Vallombrosa are deciduous and spread to a great extent ; those near the convent are, indeed, mostly pines ; but they are avenues of trees planted within a few steps of each other, and thus composing large tracts of wood, plots of which are periodically cut down. The appearance of those narrow avenues, upon steep slopes open to the sky, on account of the height which the trees attain by being forced to grow upwards, is often very impressive. My guide, a boy of about fourteen years old, pointed this out to me in several places.]

310. * *Sonnet at Florence.* [xix.]

‘Under the shadow of a stately pile.’

Upon what evidence the belief rests that this stone was a favourite seat of Dante, I do not know ; but a man would little consult his own interest as a traveller, if he should busy himself with doubts as to the fact. The readiness with which traditions of this character are received, and the fidelity with which they are preserved from generation to generation, are an evidence of

feelings honourable to our nature. I remember now, during one of my rambles in the course of a college vacation, I was pleased at being shown at —— a seat near a kind of rocky cell at the source of the river ——, on which it was said that Congreve wrote his *Old Bachelor*. One can scarcely hit on any performance less in harmony with the scene ; but it was a local tribute paid to intellect by those who had not troubled themselves to estimate the moral worth of that author's comedies. And why should they ? he was a man distinguished in his day, and the sequestered neighbourhood in which he often resided was perhaps as proud of him as Florence of her Dante. It is the same feeling, though proceeding from persons one cannot bring together in this way without offering some apology to the shade of the great visionary.

311. * *The Baptist.* [xx.]

It was very hot weather during the week we stayed at Florence ; and, having never been there before, I went through much hard service, and am not, therefore, *ashamed* to confess, I fell asleep before this picture, and sitting with my back towards the Venus de Medicis. Buonaparte, in answer to one who had spoken of his being in a sound sleep up to the moment when one of his great battles was to be fought, as a proof of the calmness of his mind and command over anxious thoughts, said frankly, ‘that he slept because, from bodily exhaustion, he could not help it.’ In like manner it is noticed that criminals, on the night previous to their execution, seldom awake before they are called, a proof that the body is the master of us far more than we need be willing to allow.

Should this note by any possible chance be seen by any of my countrymen who might have been in the Gallery at the time (and several persons were there) and witnessed such an indecorum, I hope he will give up the opinion which he might naturally have formed to my prejudice.

312. * *Florence.*

‘Rapt above earth,’ and the following one. [xxi.-ii.]

However, at first, these two Sonnets from M. Angelo may seem in their spirit somewhat inconsistent with each other, I

have not scrupled to place them side by side as characteristic of their great author, and others with whom he lived. I feel, nevertheless, a wish to know at what periods of his life they were respectively composed. The latter, as it expresses, was written in his advanced years, when it was natural that the Platonism that pervades the one should give way to the Christian feeling that inspired the other. Between both, there is more than poetic affinity.

312^a. * *Among the Ruins of a Convent in the Apennines.* [xxiii.]

The political revolutions of our time have multiplied on the Continent objects that unavoidably call forth reflections such as are expressed in these verses, but the ruins in those countries are too recent to exhibit in anything like an equal degree the beauty with which time and Nature have invested the remains of our convents and abbeys. These verses, it will be observed, take up the beauty long before it is matured, as one cannot but wish it may be among some of the desolations of Italy, France, and Germany.

313. * *Sonnets after leaving Italy.* [xxv.]

I had proof in several instances that the Carbonari, if I may still call them so, and their favourers, are opening their eyes to the necessity of patience, and are intent upon spreading knowledge actively, but quietly as they can. May they have resolution to continue in this course, for it is the only one by which they can truly benefit their country.

We left Italy by the way which is called the ‘Nuova Strada d’Allemagna,’ to the east of the high passes of the Alps, which take you at once from Italy into Switzerland. The road leads across several smaller heights, and winds down different vales in succession, so that it was only by the accidental sound of a few German words I was aware we had quitted Italy; and hence the unwelcome shock alluded to in the two or three last lines of the Sonnet with which this imperfect series concludes.

314. * *Composed at Rydal on May morning, 1838.*

This and the following Sonnet [now xxvi.] were composed on what we call the ‘far terrace’ at Rydal Mount, where I have murmured out many thousands of my verses.

315. * *Pillar of Trajan.* [xxviii.]

These verses had better, perhaps, be transferred to the class of ‘Italian Poems.’ I had observed in the newspaper that ‘The Pillar of Trajan’ was given as a subject for a Prize Poem in English verse. I had a wish, perhaps, that my son, who was then an undergraduate at Oxford, should try his fortune; and I told him so: but he, not having been accustomed to write verse, wisely declined to enter on the task; whereupon I showed him these lines as a proof of what might, without difficulty, be done on such a subject.

316. * *The Egyptian Maid.*

In addition to the short notice prefixed to this poem, it may be worth while here to say, that it rose out of a few words casually used in conversation by my nephew Henry Hutchinson. He was describing with great spirit the appearance and movement of a vessel which he seemed to admire more than any other he had ever seen, and said her name was the Water Lily. This plant has been my delight from my boyhood, as I have seen it floating on the lake; and that conversation put me upon constructing and composing the poem. Had I not heard those words it would never have been written. The form of the stanza is new, and is nothing but a repetition of the first five lines as they were thrown off, and is, perhaps, not well suited to narrative, and certainly would not have been trusted to had I thought at the beginning that the poem would have gone to such a length. [The short note referred to *supra* is as follows: ‘For the names and persons in the following poem see the *History of the Renowned Prince Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table*; for the rest the author is answerable; only it may be proper to add that the Lotus, with the bust of the goddess appearing to rise out of the full-blown flower, was suggested by the beautiful work of ancient art once included among the Townley Marbles, and now in the British Museum.’]

XIII. THE RIVER DUDDON: A SERIES OF SONNETS.

317. *Introduction.*

The River Duddon rises upon Wrynose Fell, on the confines of Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire: and, having served as a boundary to the two last counties for the space of about twenty-five miles, enters the Irish Sea, between the Isle of Walney and the Lordship of Millum.

318. ‘*The River Duddon.*’

A Poet, whose works are not yet known as they deserve to be, thus enters upon his description of the ‘Ruins of Rome:’

‘The rising Sun
Flames on the ruins in the purer air
Towering aloft;’

and ends thus—

‘The setting sun displays
His visible great round, between yon towers,
As through two shady cliffs.’

Mr. Crowe, in his excellent loco-descriptive Poem, ‘Lewesdon Hill,’ is still more expeditious, finishing the whole on a May-morning, before breakfast.

‘To-morrow for severer thought, but now
To breakfast, and keep festival to-day.’

No one believes, or is desired to believe, that those Poems were actually composed within such limits of time; nor was there any reason why a prose statement should acquaint the Reader with the plain fact, to the disturbance of poetic credibility. But, in the present case, I am compelled to mention, that the above series of Sonnets was the growth of many years; —the one which stands the 14th was the first produced; and others were added upon occasional visits to the Stream, or as recollections of the scenes upon its banks awakened a wish to describe them. In this manner I had proceeded insensibly, without perceiving that I was trespassing upon ground pre-occupied, at least as far as intention went, by Mr. Coleridge; who, more than twenty years ago, used to speak of writing a rural Poem, to be entitled ‘The Brook,’ of which he has given a sketch in a recent publication. But a particular subject cannot, I

think, much interfere with a general one; and I have been further kept from encroaching upon any right Mr. C. may still wish to exercise, by the restriction which the frame of the Sonnet imposed upon me, narrowing unavoidably the range of thought, and precluding, though not without its advantages, many graces to which a freer movement of verse would naturally have led.

May I not venture, then, to hope, that, instead of being a hindrance, by anticipation of any part of the subject, these Sonnets may remind Mr. Coleridge of his own more comprehensive design, and induce him to fulfil it?—There is a sympathy in streams,—‘one calleth to another;’ and I would gladly believe, that ‘The Brook’ will, ere long, murmur in concert with ‘The Duddon.’ But, asking pardon for this fancy, I need not scruple to say, that those verses must indeed be ill-fated which can enter upon such pleasant walks of Nature, without receiving and giving inspiration. The power of waters over the minds of Poets has been acknowledged from the earliest ages;—through the ‘Flumina amem sylvasque inglorius’ of Virgil, down to the sublime apostrophe to the great rivers of the earth, by Armstrong, and the simple ejaculation of Burns, (chosen, if I recollect right, by Mr. Coleridge, as a motto for his embryo ‘Brook,’)—

‘The Muse nae Poet ever fand her,
Till by himself he learned to wander
Adown some trotting burn’s meander
AND NA’ THINK LANG.’

319. * *The Sonnets on the River Duddon.*

It is with the little River Duddon as it is with most other rivers, Ganges and Nile not excepted,—many springs might claim the honour of being its head. In my own fancy, I have fixed its rise near the noted Shire Stones placed at the meeting point of the counties Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire. They stand by the wayside, on the top of the Wry-nose Pass, and it used to be reckoned a proud thing to say, that by touching them at the same time with feet and hands, one had been in three counties at once. At what point of its course the stream takes the name of Duddon, I do not know. I first became acquainted with the Duddon, as I have good reason to remember, in early boyhood. Upon the banks of the Derwent, I had learnt to be very fond of angling. Fish abound in that

large river,—not so in the small streams in the neighbourhood of Hawkshead; and I fell into the common delusion, that the further from home the better sport would be had. Accordingly, one day I attached myself to a person living in the neighbourhood of Hawkshead, who was going to try his fortune, as an angler, near the source of the Duddon. We fished a great part of the day with very sorry success, the rain pouring torrents; and long before we got home, I was worn out with fatigue; and if the good man had not carried me on his back, I must have lain down under the best shelter I could find. Little did I think then it would have been my lot to celebrate, in a strain of love and admiration, the stream which for many years I never thought of without recollections of disappointment and distress.

During my college vacation, and two or three years afterwards, before taking my bachelor's degree, I was several times resident in the house of a near relative, who lived in the small town of Broughton. I passed many delightful hours upon the banks of this river, which becomes an estuary about a mile from that place. The remembrances of that period are the subject of the 21st Sonnet. The subject of the 27th Sonnet is, in fact, taken from a tradition belonging to Rydal Hall, which once stood, as is believed, upon a rocky and woody hill on the right hand as you go from Rydal to Ambleside, and was deserted, from the superstitious fear here described, and the present site fortunately chosen instead. The present Hall was erected by Sir Michael le Fleming, and it may be hoped that at some future time there will be an edifice more worthy of so beautiful a position. With regard to the 30th Sonnet, it is odd enough that this imagination was realised in the year 1840, when I made a tour through this district with my wife and daughter, Miss Fenwick and her niece, and Mr. and Miss Quillinan. Before our return from Seathwaite Chapel, the party separated. Mrs. Wordsworth, while most of us went further up the stream, chose an opposite direction, having told us that we would overtake her on our way to Ulpha. But she was tempted out of the main road to ascend a rocky eminence near it, thinking it impossible we should pass without seeing her. This however unfortunately happened; and then ensued vexation and distress, especially to me, which I should be ashamed to have recorded, for I lost my temper entirely. Neither I nor those who were with me saw her again till we

reached the Inn at Broughton, seven miles. This may perhaps in some degree excuse my irritability on the occasion, for I could not but think she had been much to blame. It appeared, however, on explanation, that she had remained on the rock, calling out and waving her handkerchief as we were passing, in order that we also might ascend and enjoy a prospect which had much charmed her. ‘But on we went, her signals proving vain.’ How then could she reach Broughton before us? When we found she had not gone on to Ulpha Kirk, Mr. Quillinan went back in one of the carriages in search of her. He met her on the road, took her up, and by a shorter way conveyed her to Broughton, where we were all re-united and spent a happy evening.

I have many affecting remembrances connected with this stream. These I forbear to mention, especially things that occurred on its banks during the latter part of that visit to the sea-side, of which the former part is detailed in my Epistle to Sir George Beaumont.

[The following additional notices of his latter excursion to the banks of the Duddon are from a letter to Lady Frederick Bentinck.

‘ You will have wondered, dear Lady Frederick, what is become of me. I have been wandering about the country, and only returned yesterday. Our tour was by Keswick, Scale Hill, Buttermere, Loweswater, Ennerdale, Calder Abbey, Wastdale, Eskdale, the Vale of Duddon, Broughton, Furness Abbey, Peele Castle, Ulverston, &c.; we had broken weather, which kept us long upon the road, but we had also very fine intervals, and I often wished you had been present. We had such glorious sights! one, in particular, I never saw the like of. About sunset we were directly opposite that large, lofty precipice at Wastwater, which is called the Screes. The ridge of it is broken into sundry points, and along them, and partly along the side of the steep, went driving a procession of yellow vapoury clouds from the sea-quarter towards the mountain Scafell. Their colours I have called yellow, but it was exquisitely varied, and the shapes of the rocks on the summit of the ridge varied with the density or thinness of the vapours. The effect was most enchanting; for right above was steadfastly fixed a beautiful rainbow. We were a party of seven, Mrs. Wordsworth, my daughter, and Miss Fenwick included, and it would be difficult

to say who was most delighted. The Abbey of Furness, as you well know, is a noble ruin, and most happily situated in a dell that entirely hides it from the surrounding country. It is taken excellent care of, and seems little dilapidated since I first knew it, more than half a century ago.] *

320. *The Wild Strawberry : Sympson.* [Sonnet vi. ll. 9-10.]

'There bloomed the strawberry of the wilderness,
The trembling eyebright showed her sapphire blue.'

These two lines are in a great measure taken from 'The Beauties of Spring, a Juvenile Poem,' by the Rev. Joseph Sympson. He was a native of Cumberland, and was educated in the vale of Grasmere, and at Hawkshead school: his poems are little known, but they contain passages of splendid description; and the versification of his 'Vision of Alfred' is harmonious and animated. In describing the motions of the Sylphs, that constitute the strange machinery of his Poem, he uses the following illustrative simile :

— 'Glancing from their plumes
A changeful light the azure vault illumes.
Less varying hues beneath the Pole adorn
The streamy glories of the Boreal morn,
That wavering to and fro their radiance shed
On Bothnia's gulf with glassy ice o'erspread,
Where the lone native, as he homeward glides,
On polished sandals o'er the imprisoned tides,
And still the balance of his frame preserves,
Wheeled on alternate foot in lengthening curves,
Sees at a glance, above him and below,
Two rival heavens with equal splendour glow.
Sphered in the centre of the world he seems;
For all around with soft effulgence gleams;
Stars, moons, and meteors, ray opposed to ray,
And solemn midnight pours the blaze of day.'

He was a man of ardent feeling, and his faculties of mind, particularly his memory, were extraordinary. Brief notices of his life ought to find a place in the History of Westmoreland.

321. 'Return' and 'Seathwaite Chapel.' [Sonnets xvii. and xviii.]

The EAGLE requires a large domain for its support: but several pairs, not many years ago, were constantly resident in

this country, building their nests in the steeps of Borrowdale, Wastdale, Ennerdale, and on the eastern side of Helvellyn. Often have I heard anglers speak of the grandeur of their appearance, as they hovered over Red Tarn, in one of the coves of this mountain. The bird frequently returns, but is always destroyed. Not long since, one visited Rydal lake, and remained some hours near its banks: the consternation which it occasioned among the different species of fowl, particularly the herons, was expressed by loud screams. The horse also is naturally afraid of the eagle.—There were several Roman stations among these mountains; the most considerable seems to have been in a meadow at the head of Windermere, established, undoubtedly, as a check over the Passes of Kirkstone, Dunmail-raise, and of Hardknot and Wrynose. On the margin of Rydal lake, a coin of Trajan was discovered very lately.—The ROMAN FORT here alluded to, called by the country people '*Hardknot Castle*,' is most impressively situated half-way down the hill on the right of the road that descends from Hardknot into Eskdale. It has escaped the notice of most antiquarians, and is but slightly mentioned by Lysons.—The DRUIDICAL CIRCLE is about half a mile to the left of the road ascending Stone-side from the vale of Duddon: the country people call it '*Sunken Church*.'

The reader who may have been interested in the foregoing Sonnets, (which together may be considered as a Poem,) will not be displeased to find in this place a prose account of the Duddon, extracted from Green's comprehensive *Guide to the Lakes*, lately published. ‘The road leading from Coniston to Broughton is over high ground, and commands a view of the River Duddon; which, at high water, is a grand sight, having the beautiful and fertile lands of Lancashire and Cumberland stretching each way from its margin. In this extensive view, the face of Nature is displayed in a wonderful variety of hill and dale; wooded grounds and buildings; amongst the latter Broughton Tower, seated on the crown of a hill, rising elegantly from the valley, is an object of extraordinary interest. Fertility on each side is gradually diminished, and lost in the superior heights of Blackcomb, in Cumberland, and the high lands between Kirkby and Ulverstone.

‘The road from Broughton to Seathwaite is on the banks of

the Duddon, and on its Lancashire side it is of various elevations. The river is an amusing companion, one while brawling and tumbling over rocky precipices, until the agitated water becomes again calm by arriving at a smoother and less precipitous bed, but its course is soon again ruffled, and the current thrown into every variety of form which the rocky channel of a river can give to water.'—*Vide Green's Guide to the Lakes*, vol. i. pp. 98-100.

After all, the traveller would be most gratified who should approach this beautiful Stream, neither at its source, as is done in the Sonnets, nor from its termination; but from Coniston over Walna Scar; first descending into a little circular valley, a collateral compartment of the long winding vale through which flows the Duddon. This recess, towards the close of September, when the after-grass of the meadow is still of a fresh green, with the leaves of many of the trees faded, but perhaps none fallen, is truly enchanting. At a point elevated enough to show the various objects in the valley, and not so high as to diminish their importance, the stranger will instinctively halt. On the foreground, a little below the most favourable station, a rude foot-bridge is thrown over the bed of the noisy brook foaming by the way-side. Russet and craggy hills, of bold and varied outline, surround the level valley, which is besprinkled with grey rocks plumed with birch trees. A few homesteads are interspersed, in some places peeping out from among the rocks like hermitages, whose site has been chosen for the benefit of sunshine as well as shelter; in other instances, the dwelling-house, barn, and byre compose together a cruciform structure, which, with its embowering trees, and the ivy clothing part of the walls and roof like a fleece, call to mind the remains of an ancient abbey. Time, in most cases, and Nature everywhere, have given a sanctity to the humble works of man that are scattered over this peaceful retirement. Hence a harmony of tone and colour, a consummation and perfection of beauty, which would have been marred had aim or purpose interfered with the course of convenience, utility, or necessity. This unvitiated region stands in no need of the veil of twilight to soften or disguise its features. As it glistens in the morning sunshine, it would fill the spectator's heart with gladsomeness. Looking from our chosen station, he would feel an impatience

to rove among its pathways, to be greeted by the milkmaid, to wander from house to house, exchanging ‘good-morrows’ as he passed the open doors ; but, at evening, when the sun is set, and a pearly light gleams from the western quarter of the sky, with an answering light from the smooth surface of the meadows ; when the trees are dusky, but each kind still distinguishable ; when the cool air has condensed the blue smoke rising from the cottage chimneys ; when the dark mossy stones seem to sleep in the bed of the foaming brook ; *then*, he would be unwilling to move forward, not less from a reluctance to relinquish what he beholds, than from an apprehension of disturbing, by his approach, the quietness beneath him. Issuing from the plain of this valley, the brook descends in a rapid torrent passing by the church-yard of Seathwaite. The traveller is thus conducted at once into the midst of the wild and beautiful scenery which gave occasion to the Sonnets from the 14th to the 20th inclusive. From the point where the Seathwaite brook joins the Duddon, is a view upwards, into the pass through which the river makes its way into the plain of Donnerdale. The perpendicular rock on the right bears the ancient British name of THE PEN ; the one opposite is called WALLA-BARROW CRAG, a name that occurs in other places to designate rocks of the same character. The *chaotic* aspect of the scene is well marked by the expression of a stranger, who strolled out while dinner was preparing, and at his return, being asked by his host, ‘ What way he had been wandering ?’ replied, ‘ As far as it is *finished* !’

The bed of the Duddon is here strewn with large fragments of rocks fallen from aloft ; which, as Mr. Green truly says, ‘ are happily adapted to the many-shaped waterfalls,’ (or rather water-breaks, for none of them are high,) ‘ displayed in the short space of half a mile.’ That there is some hazard in frequenting these desolate places, I myself have had proof; for one night an immense mass of rock fell upon the very spot where, with a friend, I had lingered the day before. ‘ The concussion,’ says Mr. Green, speaking of the event, (for he also, in the practice of his art, on that day sat exposed for a still longer time to the same peril,) ‘ was heard, not without alarm, by the neighbouring shepherds.’ But to return to Seathwaite Church-yard : it contains the following inscription :

‘In memory of the Reverend Robert Walker, who died the 25th of June, 1802, in the 93d year of his age, and 67th of his curacy at Seathwaite.

‘Also, of Anne his wife, who died the 28th of January, in the 93d year of her age.’

In the parish-register of Seathwaite Chapel, is this notice :

‘Buried, June 28th, the Rev. Robert Walker. He was curate of Seathwaite sixty-six years. He was a man singular for his temperance, industry, and integrity.’

This individual is the Pastor alluded to, in the eighteenth Sonnet, as a worthy compeer of the country parson of Chaucer, &c. In the seventh book of the *Excursion*, an abstract of his character is given, beginning—

‘A Priest abides before whose life such doubts
Fall to the ground;—’

and some account of his life, for it is worthy of being recorded, will not be out of place here.

322. *Memoir of the Rev. Robert Walker.*

(‘Pastor,’ in Book vii. of ‘The Excursion.’)

In the year 1709, Robert Walker was born at Under-crag, in Seathwaite; he was the youngest of twelve children. His eldest brother, who inherited the small family estate, died at Under-crag, aged ninety-four, being twenty-four years older than the subject of this Memoir, who was born of the same mother. Robert was a sickly infant; and, through his boyhood and youth, continuing to be of delicate frame and tender health, it was deemed best, according to the country phrase, to *breed him a scholar*; for it was not likely that he would be able to earn a livelihood by bodily labour. At that period few of these dales were furnished with schoolhouses; the children being taught to read and write in the chapel; and in the same consecrated building, where he officiated for so many years both as preacher and schoolmaster, he himself received the rudiments of his education. In his youth he became schoolmaster at Loweswater; not being called upon, probably, in that situation, to teach more than reading, writing, and arithmetic. But, by the assistance of a ‘Gentleman’ in the neighbourhood, he acquired, at leisure hours, a knowledge of the classics, and became qualified for taking holy orders. Upon his ordination, he had the

offer of two curacies: the one, Torver, in the vale of Coniston,—the other, Seathwaite, in his native vale. The value of each was the same, *viz.*, five pounds *per annum*: but the cure of Seathwaite having a cottage attached to it, as he wished to marry, he chose it in preference. The young person on whom his affections were fixed, though in the condition of a domestic servant, had given promise, by her serious and modest deportment, and by her virtuous dispositions, that she was worthy to become the helpmate of a man entering upon a plan of life such as he had marked out for himself. By her frugality she had stored up a small sum of money, with which they began house-keeping. In 1735 or 1736, he entered upon his curacy; and, nineteen years afterwards, his situation is thus described, in some letters to be found in the *Annual Register* for 1760, from which the following is extracted:—

‘ To MR. ———.

‘ Coniston, July 26, 1754.

‘ Sir,—I was the other day upon a party of pleasure, about five or six miles from this place, where I met with a very striking object, and of a nature not very common. Going into a clergyman’s house (of whom I had frequently heard), I found him sitting at the head of a long square table, such as is commonly used in this country by the lower class of people, dressed in a coarse blue frock, trimmed with black horn buttons; a checked shirt, a leather strap about his neck for a stock, a coarse apron, and a pair of great wooden-soled shoes plated with iron to preserve them (what we call clogs in these parts), with a child upon his knee, eating his breakfast; his wife, and the remainder of his children, were some of them employed in waiting upon each other, the rest in teasing and spinning wool, at which trade he is a great proficient; and moreover, when it is made ready for sale, will lay it, by sixteen or thirty-two pounds’ weight, upon his back, and on foot, seven or eight miles, will carry it to the market, even in the depth of winter. I was not much surprised at all this, as you may possibly be, having heard a great deal of it related before. But I must confess myself astonished with the alacrity and the good humour that appeared both in the clergyman and his wife, and more so at the sense and ingenuity of the clergyman himself.’ . . .

Then follows a letter from another person, dated 1755, from which an extract shall be given.

‘By his frugality and good management, he keeps the wolf from the door, as we say; and if he advances a little in the world, it is owing more to his own care, than to anything else he has to rely upon. I don’t find his inclination is running after further preferment. He is settled among the people, that are happy among themselves; and lives in the greatest unanimity and friendship with them; and, I believe, the minister and people are exceedingly satisfied with each other; and indeed how should they be dissatisfied when they have a person of so much worth and probity for their pastor? A man who, for his candour and meekness, his sober, chaste, and virtuous conversation, his soundness in principle and practice, is an ornament to his profession, and an honour to the country he is in; and bear with me if I say, the plainness of his dress, the sanctity of his manners, the simplicity of his doctrine, and the vehemence of his expression, have a sort of resemblance to the pure practice of primitive Christianity.’

We will now give his own account of himself, to be found in the same place.

‘FROM THE REV. ROBERT WALKER.

‘Sir,—Yours of the 26th instant was communicated to me by Mr. C——, and I should have returned an immediate answer, but the hand of Providence, then laying heavy upon an amiable pledge of conjugal endearment, hath since taken from me a promising girl, which the disconsolate mother too pensively laments the loss of; though we have yet eight living, all healthful, hopeful children, whose names and ages are as follows:—Zaccheus, aged almost eighteen years; Elizabeth, sixteen years and ten months; Mary, fifteen; Moses, thirteen years and three months; Sarah, ten years and three months; Mabel, eight years and three months; William Tyson, three years and eight months; and Anne Esther, one year and three months; besides Anne, who died two years and six months ago, and was then aged between nine and ten; and Eleanor, who died the 23d inst., January, aged six years and ten months. Zaccheus, the eldest child, is now learning the trade of tanner, and has two years and a half of his apprenticeship to serve. The annual

income of my chapel at present, as near as I can compute it, may amount to about $17l.$, of which is paid in cash, viz., $5l.$ from the bounty of Queen Anne, and $5l.$ from W. P., Esq., of P—, out of the annual rents, he being lord of the manor; and $3l.$ from the several inhabitants of L—, settled upon the tenements as a rent-charge; the house and gardens I value at $4l.$ yearly, and not worth more; and I believe the surplice fees and voluntary contributions, one year with another, may be worth $3l.$; but as the inhabitants are few in number, and the fees very low, this last-mentioned sum consists merely in free-will offerings.

‘I am situated greatly to my satisfaction with regard to the conduct and behaviour of my auditory, who not only live in the happy ignorance of the follies and vices of the age, but in mutual peace and goodwill with one another, and are seemingly (I hope really too) sincere Christians, and sound members of the Established Church, not one dissenter of any denomination being amongst them all. I got to the value of $40l.$ for my wife’s fortune, but had no real estate of my own, being the youngest son of twelve children, born of obscure parents; and, though my income has been but small, and my family large, yet, by a providential blessing upon my own diligent endeavours, the kindness of friends, and a cheap country to live in, we have always had the necessaries of life. By what I have written (which is a true and exact account, to the best of my knowledge,) I hope you will not think your favour to me, out of the late worthy Dr. Stratford’s effects, quite misbestowed, for which I must ever gratefully own myself,

Sir,

‘Your much obliged and most obedient humble Servant,

‘R. W., Curate of S—.

‘To Mr. C., of Lancaster.’

About the time when this letter was written the Bishop of Chester recommended the scheme of joining the curacy of Ulpha to the contiguous one of Seathwaite, and the nomination was offered to Mr. Walker; but an unexpected difficulty arising, Mr. W., in a letter to the Bishop, (a copy of which, in his own beautiful handwriting, now lies before me,) thus expresses himself. ‘If he,’ meaning the person in whom the difficulty originated, ‘had suggested any such objection before, I should utterly

have declined any attempt to the curacy of Ulpha; indeed, I was always apprehensive it might be disagreeable to my auditory at Seathwaite, as they have been always accustomed to double duty, and the inhabitants of Ulpha despair of being able to support a schoolmaster who is not curate there also; which suppressed all thoughts in me of serving them both.' And in a second letter to the Bishop he writes:

' My Lord,—I have the favour of yours of the 1st instant, and am exceedingly obliged on account of the Ulpha affair: if that curacy should lapse into your Lordship's hands, I would beg leave rather to decline than embrace it; for the chapels of Seathwaite and Ulpha, annexed together, would be apt to cause a general discontent among the inhabitants of both places; by either thinking themselves slighted, being only served alternately, or neglected in the duty, or attributing it to covetousness in me; all which occasions of murmuring I would willingly avoid.' And in concluding his former letter, he expresses a similar sentiment upon the same occasion, 'desiring, if it be possible, however, as much as in me lieth, to live peaceably with all men.'

The year following, the curacy of Seathwaite was again augmented; and, to effect this augmentation, fifty pounds had been advanced by himself; and, in 1760, lands were purchased with eight hundred pounds. Scanty as was his income, the frequent offer of much better benefices could not tempt Mr. W. to quit a situation where he had been so long happy, with a consciousness of being useful. Among his papers I find the following copy of a letter, dated 1775, twenty years after his refusal of the curacy of Ulpha, which will show what exertions had been made for one of his sons.

' May it please your Grace,—Our remote situation here makes it difficult to get the necessary information for transacting business regularly; such is the reason of my giving your Grace the present trouble.

' The bearer (my son) is desirous of offering himself candidate for deacon's orders at your Grace's ensuing ordination; the first, on the 25th instant, so that his papers could not be transmitted in due time. As he is now fully at age, and I have afforded him education to the utmost of my ability, it would give

me great satisfaction (if your Grace would take him, and find him qualified) to have him ordained. His constitution has been tender for some years ; he entered the college of Dublin, but his health would not permit him to continue there, or I would have supported him much longer. He has been with me at home above a year, in which time he has gained great strength of body, sufficient, I hope, to enable him for performing the function. Divine Providence, assisted by liberal benefactors, has blest my endeavours, from a small income, to rear a numerous family ; and as my time of life renders me now unfit for much future expectancy from this world, I should be glad to see my son settled in a promising way to acquire an honest livelihood for himself. His behaviour, so far in life, has been irreproachable ; and I hope he will not degenerate, in principles or practice, from the precepts and pattern of an indulgent parent. Your Grace's favourable reception of this, from a distant corner of the diocese, and an obscure hand, will excite filial gratitude, and a due use shall be made of the obligation vouchsafed thereby to

‘Your Grace’s very dutiful and most obedient Son and Servant,

ROBERT WALKER.’

The same man, who was thus liberal in the education of his numerous family, was even munificent in hospitality as a parish priest. Every Sunday, were served, upon the long table, at which he has been described sitting with a child upon his knee, messes of broth, for the refreshment of those of his congregation who came from a distance, and usually took their seats as parts of his own household. It seems scarcely possible that this custom could have commenced before the augmentation of his cure ; and what would to many have been a high price of self-denial, was paid, by the pastor and his family, for this gratification ; as the treat could only be provided by dressing at one time the whole, perhaps, of their weekly allowance of fresh animal food ; consequently, for a succession of days, the table was covered with cold victuals only. His generosity in old age may be still further illustrated by a little circumstance relating to an orphan grandson, then ten years of age, which I find in a copy of a letter to one of his sons ; he requests that half a guinea may be left for ‘little Robert’s pocket-money,’ who was then at school : intrusting it to the care of a lady, who, as he says, ‘may sometimes

frustrate his squandering it away foolishly,' and promising to send him an equal allowance annually for the same purpose. The conclusion of the same letter is so characteristic, that I cannot forbear to transcribe it. 'We,' meaning his wife and himself, 'are in our wonted state of health, allowing for the hasty strides of old age knocking daily at our door, and threateningly telling us, we are not only mortal, but must expect ere long to take our leave of our ancient cottage, and lie down in our last dormitory. Pray pardon my neglect to answer yours: let us hear sooner from you, to augment the mirth of the Christmas holidays. Wishing you all the pleasures of the approaching season, I am, dear Son, with lasting sincerity, yours affectionately,

'ROBERT WALKER.'

He loved old customs and old usages, and in some instances stuck to them to his own loss; for, having had a sum of money lodged in the hands of a neighbouring tradesman, when long course of time had raised the rate of interest, and more was offered, he refused to accept it; an act not difficult to one, who, while he was drawing seventeen pounds a year from his curacy, declined, as we have seen, to add the profits of another small benefice to his own, lest he should be suspected of cupidity.—From this vice he was utterly free; he made no charge for teaching school; such as could afford to pay, gave him what they pleased. When very young, having kept a diary of his expenses, however trifling, the large amount, at the end of the year, surprised him; and from that time the rule of his life was to be economical, not avaricious. At his decease he left behind him no less a sum than 2000*l.*; and such a sense of his various excellencies was prevalent in the country, that the epithet of WONDERFUL is to this day attached to his name.

There is in the above sketch something so extraordinary as to require further *explanatory* details.—And to begin with his industry; eight hours in each day, during five days in the week, and half of Saturday, except when the labours of husbandry were urgent, he was occupied in teaching. His seat was within the rails of the altar; the communion table was his desk; and, like Shenstone's schoolmistress, the master employed himself at the spinning-wheel, while the children were repeating their lessons by his side. Every evening, after school hours, if not more

profitably engaged, he continued the same kind of labour, exchanging, for the benefit of exercise, the small wheel, at which he had sate, for the large one on which wool is spun, the spinner stepping to and fro. Thus, was the wheel constantly in readiness to prevent the waste of a moment's time. Nor was his industry with the pen, when occasion called for it, less eager. Intrusted with extensive management of public and private affairs, he acted, in his rustic neighbourhood, as scrivener, writing out petitions, deeds of conveyance, wills, covenants, &c., with pecuniary gain to himself, and to the great benefit of his employers. These labours (at all times considerable) at one period of the year, viz., between Christmas and Candlemas, when money transactions are settled in this country, were often so intense, that he passed great part of the night, and sometimes whole nights, at his desk. His garden also was tilled by his own hand ; he had a right of pasturage upon the mountains for a few sheep and a couple of cows, which required his attendance ; with this pastoral occupation, he joined the labours of husbandry upon a small scale, renting two or three acres in addition to his own less than one acre of glebe ; and the humblest drudgery which the cultivation of these fields required was performed by himself.

He also assisted his neighbours in haymaking and shearing their flocks, and in the performance of this latter service he was eminently dexterous. They, in their turn, complimented him with the present of a haycock, or a fleece ; less as a recompence for this particular service than as a general acknowledgment. The Sabbath was in a strict sense kept holy ; the Sunday evenings being devoted to reading the Scripture and family prayer. The principal festivals appointed by the Church were also duly observed ; but through every other day in the week, through every week in the year, he was incessantly occupied in work of hand or mind ; not allowing a moment for recreation, except upon a Saturday afternoon, when he indulged himself with a Newspaper, or sometimes with a Magazine. The frugality and temperance established in his house, were as admirable as the industry. Nothing to which the name of luxury could be given was there known ; in the latter part of his life, indeed, when tea had been brought into almost general use, it was provided for visitors, and for such of his own family as returned occasionally

to his roof, and had been accustomed to this refreshment elsewhere ; but neither he nor his wife ever partook of it. The raiment worn by his family was comely and decent, but as simple as their diet ; the home-spun materials were made up into apparel by their own hands. At the time of the decease of this thrifty pair, their cottage contained a large store of webs of woollen and linen cloth, woven from thread of their own spinning. And it is remarkable that the pew in the chapel in which the family used to sit, remains neatly lined with woollen cloth spun by the pastor's own hands. It is the only pew in the chapel so distinguished ; and I know of no other instance of his conformity to the delicate accommodations of modern times. The fuel of the house, like that of their neighbours, consisted of peat, procured from the mosses by their own labour. The lights by which, in the winter evenings, their work was performed, were of their own manufacture, such as still continue to be used in these cottages ; they are made of the pith of rushes, dipped in any unctuous substance that the house affords. *White* candles, as tallow candles are here called, were reserved to honour the Christmas festivals, and were perhaps produced upon no other occasions. Once a month, during the proper season, a sheep was drawn from their small mountain flock, and killed for the use of the family ; and a cow, towards the close of the year, was salted and dried for winter provision : the hide was tanned to furnish them with shoes.—By these various resources, this venerable clergyman reared a numerous family, not only preserving them, as he affectingly says, ‘from wanting the necessities of life ;’ but affording them an unstinted education, and the means of raising themselves in society. In this they were eminently assisted by the effects of their father’s example, his precepts, and injunctions : he was aware that truth-speaking, as a moral virtue, is best secured by inculcating attention to accuracy of report even on trivial occasions ; and so rigid were the rules of honesty by which he endeavoured to bring up his family, that if one of them had chanced to find in the lanes or fields anything of the least use or value without being able to ascertain to whom it belonged, he always insisted upon the child’s carrying it back to the place from which it had been brought.

No one it might be thought could, as has been described, convert his body into a machine, as it were, of industry for the

humblest uses, and keep his thoughts so frequently bent upon secular concerns, without grievous injury to the more precious parts of his nature. How could the powers of intellect thrive, or its graces be displayed, in the midst of circumstances apparently so unfavourable, and where, to the direct cultivation of the mind, so small a portion of time was allotted? But, in this extraordinary man, things in their nature adverse were reconciled. His conversation was remarkable, not only for being chaste and pure, but for the degree in which it was fervent and eloquent; his written style was correct, simple, and animated. Nor did his *affections* suffer more than his intellect; he was tenderly alive to all the duties of his pastoral office: the poor and needy ‘he never sent empty away,’—the stranger was fed and refreshed in passing that unfrequented vale—the sick were visited; and the feelings of humanity found further exercise among the distresses and embarrassments in the worldly estate of his neighbours, with which his talents for business made him acquainted; and the disinterestedness, impartiality, and uprightness which he maintained in the management of all affairs confided to him, were virtues seldom separated in his own conscience from religious obligation. Nor could such conduct fail to remind those who witnessed it of a spirit nobler than law or custom: they felt convictions which, but for such intercourse, could not have been afforded, that, as in the practice of their pastor, there was no guile, so in his faith there was nothing hollow; and we are warranted in believing, that upon these occasions, selfishness, obstinacy, and discord would often give way before the breathings of his good-will, and saintly integrity. It may be presumed also—while his humble congregation were listening to the moral precepts which he delivered from the pulpit, and to the Christian exhortations that they should love their neighbours as themselves, and do as they would be done unto—that peculiar efficacy was given to the preacher’s labours by recollections in the minds of his congregation, that they were called upon to do no more than his own actions were daily setting before their eyes.

The afternoon service in the chapel was less numerously attended than that of the morning, but by a more serious auditory; the lesson from the New Testament, on those occasions, was accompanied by Burkitt’s Commentaries. These lessons he read with impassioned emphasis, frequently drawing tears from his

hearers, and leaving a lasting impression upon their minds. His devotional feelings and the powers of his own mind were further exercised, along with those of his family, in perusing the Scriptures ; not only on the Sunday evenings, but on every other evening, while the rest of the household were at work, some one of the children, and in her turn the servant, for the sake of practice in reading, or for instruction, read the Bible aloud ; and in this manner the whole was repeatedly gone through. That no common importance was attached to the observance of religious ordinances by his family, appears from the following memorandum by one of his descendants, which I am tempted to insert at length, as it is characteristic, and somewhat curious.
'There is a small chapel in the county palatine of Lancaster, where a certain clergyman has regularly officiated above sixty years, and a few months ago administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the same, to a decent number of devout communicants. After the clergyman had received himself, the first company out of the assembly who approached the altar, and kneeled down to be partakers of the sacred elements, consisted of the parson's wife ; to whom he had been married upwards of sixty years ; one son and his wife ; four daughters, each with her husband ; whose ages, all added together, amount to above 714 years. The several and respective distances from the place of each of their abodes, to the chapel where they all communicated, will measure more than 1000 English miles. Though the narration will appear surprising, it is without doubt a fact that the same persons, exactly four years before, met at the same place, and all joined in performance of the same venerable duty.'

He was indeed most zealously attached to the doctrine and frame of the Established Church. We have seen him congratulating himself that he had no dissenters in his cure of any denomination. Some allowance must be made for the state of opinion when his first religious impressions were received, before the reader will acquit him of bigotry, when I mention, that at the time of the augmentation of the cure, he refused to invest part of the money in the purchase of an estate offered to him upon advantageous terms, because the proprietor was a Quaker ; —whether from scrupulous apprehension that a blessing would not attend a contract framed for the benefit of the Church be-

tween persons not in religious sympathy with each other ; or, as a seeker of peace, he was afraid of the uncomplying disposition which at one time was too frequently conspicuous in that sect. Of this an instance had fallen under his own notice ; for, while he taught school at Loweswater, certain persons of that denomination had refused to pay annual interest due under the title of Church-stock ;* a great hardship upon the incumbent, for the curacy of Loweswater was then scarcely less poor than that of Seathwaite. To what degree this prejudice of his was blameable need not be determined ;—certain it is, that he was not only desirous, as he himself says, to live in peace, but in love, with all men. He was placable, and charitable in his judgments ; and, however correct in conduct and rigorous to himself, he was ever ready to forgive the trespasses of others, and to soften the censure that was cast upon their frailties.—It would be unpardonable to omit that, in the maintenance of his virtues, he received due support from the partner of his long life. She was equally strict, in attending to her share of their joint cares, nor less diligent in her appropriate occupations. A person who had been some time their servant in the latter part of their lives, concluded the panegyric of her mistress by saying to me, ‘ She was no less excellent than her husband ; she was good to the poor ; she was good to every thing ! ’ He survived for a short time this virtuous companion. When she died, he ordered that her body should be borne to the grave by three of her daughters and one grand-daughter ; and, when the corpse was lifted from the threshold, he insisted upon lending his aid, and feeling about, for he was then almost blind, took hold of a napkin fixed to the coffin ; and, as a bearer of the body, entered the chapel, a few steps from the lowly parsonage.

What a contrast does the life of this obscurely-seated, and, in point of worldly wealth, poorly-repaid Churchman, present to that of a Cardinal Wolsey !

‘ O ’tis a burthen, Cromwell, ’tis a burthen
Too heavy for a man who hopes for heaven ! ’

We have been dwelling upon images of peace in the moral world, that have brought us again to the quiet enclosure of con-

* Mr. Walker’s charity being of that kind which ‘ seeketh not her own,’ he would rather forego his rights than constrain for dues which the parties liable refused, as a point of conscience, to pay.

secrated ground, in which this venerable pair lie interred. The sounding brook, that rolls close by the church-yard, without disturbing feeling or meditation, is now unfortunately laid bare; but not long ago it participated, with the chapel, the shade of some stately ash-trees, which will not spring again. While the spectator from this spot is looking round upon the girdle of stony mountains that encompasses the vale,—masses of rock, out of which monuments for all men that ever existed might have been hewn—it would surprise him to be told, as with truth he might be, that the plain blue slab dedicated to the memory of this aged pair is a production of a quarry in North Wales. It was sent as a mark of respect by one of their descendants from the vale of Festiniog, a region almost as beautiful as that in which it now lies!

Upon the Seathwaite Brook, at a small distance from the parsonage, has been erected a mill for spinning yarn; it is a mean and disagreeable object, though not unimportant to the spectator, as calling to mind the momentous changes wrought by such inventions in the frame of society—changes which have proved especially unfavourable to these mountain solitudes. So much had been effected by those new powers, before the subject of the preceding biographical sketch closed his life, that their operation could not escape his notice, and doubtless excited touching reflections upon the comparatively insignificant results of his own manual industry. But Robert Walker was not a man of times and circumstances; had he lived at a later period, the principle of duty would have produced application as unremitting; the same energy of character would have been displayed, though in many instances with widely different effects.

With pleasure I annex, as illustrative and confirmatory of the above account, extracts from a paper in the *Christian Remembrancer*, October, 1819: it bears an assumed signature, but is known to be the work of the Rev. Robert Bamford, vicar of Bishopton, in the county of Durham; a great-grandson of Mr. Walker, whose worth it commemorates, by a record not the less valuable for being written in very early youth.

‘His house was a nursery of virtue. All the inmates were industrious, and cleanly, and happy. Sobriety, neatness, quietness, characterised the whole family. No railings, no idleness, no indulgence of passion, were permitted. Every child, how-

ever young, had its appointed engagements ; every hand was busy. Knitting, spinning, reading, writing, mending clothes, making shoes, were by the different children constantly performing. The father himself sitting amongst them, and guiding their thoughts, was engaged in the same occupations. . . .

‘ He sate up late, and rose early ; when the family were at rest, he retired to a little room which he had built on the roof of his house. He had slated it, and fitted it up with shelves for his books, his stock of cloth, wearing apparel, and his utensils. There many a cold winter’s night, without fire, while the roof was glazed with ice, did he remain reading or writing till the day dawned. He taught the children in the chapel, for there was no schoolhouse. Yet in that cold, damp place he never had a fire. He used to send the children in parties either to his own fire at home, or make them run up the mountain side.

‘ It may be further mentioned, that he was a passionate admirer of Nature ; she was his mother, and he was a dutiful child. While engaged on the mountains it was his greatest pleasure to view the rising sun ; and in tranquil evenings, as it slided behind the hills, he blessed its departure. He was skilled in fossils and plants ; a constant observer of the stars and winds : the atmosphere was his delight. He made many experiments on its nature and properties. In summer he used to gather a multitude of flies and insects, and, by his entertaining description, amuse and instruct his children. They shared all his daily employments, and derived many sentiments of love and benevolence from his observations on the works and productions of Nature. Whether they were following him in the field, or surrounding him in school, he took every opportunity of storing their minds with useful information.—Nor was the circle of his influence confined to Seathwaite. Many a distant mother has told her child of Mr. Walker, and begged him to be as good a man.

‘ Once, when I was very young, I had the pleasure of seeing and hearing that venerable old man in his 90th year, and even then, the calmness, the force, the perspicuity of his sermon, sanctified and adorned by the wisdom of grey hairs, and the authority of virtue, had such an effect upon my mind, that

I never see a hoary-headed clergyman, without thinking of Mr. Walker. . . . He allowed no dissenter or methodist to interfere in the instruction of the souls committed to his cure: and so successful were his exertions, that he had not one dissenter of any denomination whatever in the whole parish.—Though he avoided all religious controversies, yet when age had silvered his head, and virtuous piety had secured to his appearance reverence and silent honour, no one, however determined in his hatred of apostolic descent, could have listened to his discourse on ecclesiastical history and ancient times, without thinking, that one of the beloved apostles had returned to mortality, and in that vale of peace had come to exemplify the beauty of holiness in the life and character of Mr. Walker.

‘ Until the sickness of his wife, a few months previous to her death, his health and spirits and faculties were unimpaired. But this misfortune gave him such a shock, that his constitution gradually decayed. His senses, except sight, still preserved their powers. He never preached with steadiness after his wife’s death. His voice faltered: he always looked at the seat she had used. He could not pass her tomb without tears. He became, when alone, sad and melancholy, though still among his friends kind and good-humoured. He went to bed about twelve o’clock the night before his death. As his custom was, he went, tottering and leaning upon his daughter’s arm, to examine the heavens, and meditate a few moments in the open air. “How clear the moon shines to-night!” He said these words, sighed, and laid down. At six next morning he was found a corpse. Many a tear, and many a heavy heart, and many a grateful blessing followed him to the grave.’

Having mentioned in this narrative the vale of Loweswater as a place where Mr. Walker taught school, I will add a few memoranda from its parish register, respecting a person apparently of desires as moderate, with whom he must have been intimate during his residence there.

‘ Let him that would, ascend the tottering seat
Of courtly grandeur, and become as great
As are his mounting wishes; but for me,
Let sweet repose and rest my portion be.

HENRY FOREST, Curate.’

' Honour, the idol which the most adore,
 Receives no homage from my knee;
 Content in privacy I value more
 Than all uneasy dignity.'

' Henry Forest came to Loweswater, 1708, being 25 years of age.'

' This curacy was twice augmented by Queen Anne's Bounty. The first payment, with great difficulty, was paid to Mr. John Curwen of London, on the 9th of May, 1724, deposited by me, Henry Forest, Curate of Loweswater. Y^e said 9th of May, y^e said Mr. Curwen went to the office, and saw my name registered there, &c. This, by the Providence of God, came by lot to this poor place. Hæc testor H. Forest.'

In another place he records, that the sycamore trees were planted in the church-yard in 1710.

He died in 1741, having been curate thirty-four years. It is not improbable that H. Forest was the gentleman who assisted Robert Walker in his classical studies at Loweswater.

To this parish register is prefixed a motto, of which the following verses are a part :

' Invigilate viri, tacito nam tempora gressu
 Diffugint, nulloque sono convertitur annus ;
 Utendum est aetate, cito pede praeterit ætas.'

323. Milton.

' We feel that we are greater than we know.' [Sonnet xxxiv. l. 14.]

' And feel that I am happier than I know.' MILTON.

The allusion to the Greek Poet will be obvious to the classical reader.

324. *The White Doe of Rylstone; or the Fate of the Nortons.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

During the summer of 1807 I visited, for the first time, the beautiful country that surrounds Bolton Priory, in Yorkshire; and the Poem of the White Doe, founded upon a tradition connected with that place, was composed at the close of the same year.

THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSSTONE.

The Poem of the White Doe of Rylstone is founded on a local tradition, and on the Ballad in Percy's Collection, entitled, 'The Rising of the North.' The tradition is as follows : 'About this time,' not long after the Dissolution, 'a White Doe,' say the aged people of the neighbourhood, 'long continued to make

a weekly pilgrimage from Rylstone over the falls of Bolton, and was constantly found in the Abbey Church-yard during divine service ; after the close of which she returned home as regularly as the rest of the congregation.'—Dr. Whitaker's *History of the Deanery of Craven*.—Rylstone was the property and residence of the Nortons, distinguished in that ill-advised and unfortunate Insurrection ; which led me to connect with this tradition the principal circumstances of their fate, as recorded in the Ballad.

'Bolton Priory,' says Dr. Whitaker in his excellent book, *The History and Antiquities of the Deanery of Craven*, 'stands upon a beautiful curvature of the Wharf, on a level sufficiently elevated to protect it from inundations, and low enough for every purpose of picturesque effect.

'Opposite to the east window of the Priory Church the river washes the foot of a rock nearly perpendicular, and of the richest purple, where several of the mineral beds, which break out, instead of maintaining their usual inclination to the horizon, are twisted by some inconceivable process into undulating and spiral lines. To the south all is soft and delicious ; the eye reposes upon a few rich pastures, a moderate reach of the river, sufficiently tranquil to form a mirror to the sun, and the bounding hills beyond, neither too near nor too lofty to exclude, even in winter, any portion of his rays.

'But, after all, the glories of Bolton are on the north. Whatever the most fastidious taste could require to constitute a perfect landscape, is not only found here, but in its proper place. In front, and immediately under the eye, is a smooth expanse of park-like enclosure, spotted with native elm, ash, &c. of the finest growth : on the right a skirting oak wood, with jutting points of grey rock ; on the left a rising copse. Still forward are seen the aged groves of Bolton Park, the growth of centuries ; and farther yet, the barren and rocky distances of Simonseat and Barden Fell contrasted with the warmth, fertility, and luxuriant foliage of the valley below.

'About half a mile above Bolton the valley closes, and either side of the Wharf is overhung by solemn woods, from which huge perpendicular masses of grey rock jut out at intervals.

'This sequestered scene was almost inaccessible till of late, that ridings have been cut on both sides of the river, and the

most interesting points laid open by judicious thinnings in the woods. Here a tributary stream rushes from a waterfall, and bursts through a woody glen to mingle its waters with the Wharf : there the Wharf itself is nearly lost in a deep cleft in the rock, and next becomes a horned flood enclosing a woody island—sometimes it reposes for a moment, and then resumes its native character, lively, irregular, and impetuous.

‘The cleft mentioned above is the tremendous STRID. This chasm, being incapable of receiving the winter floods, has formed on either side a broad strand of naked gritstone full of rock-basins, or “pots of the Linn,” which bear witness to the restless impetuosity of so many Northern torrents. But, if here Wharf is lost to the eye, it amply repays another sense by its deep and solemn roar, like “the Voice of the angry Spirit of the Waters,” heard far above and beneath, amidst the silence of the surrounding woods.

‘The terminating object of the landscape is the remains of Barden Tower, interesting from their form and situation, and still more so from the recollections which they excite.’

325. * *The White Doe of Rylstone.*

The earlier half of this poem was composed at Stockton-upon-Tees, when Mary and I were on a visit to her eldest brother, Mr. Hutchinson, at the close of the year 1807. The country is flat, and the weather was rough. I was accustomed every day to walk to and fro under the shelter of a row of stacks, in a field at a small distance from the town, and there poured forth my verses aloud, as freely as they would come. Mary reminds me that her brother stood upon the punctilio of not sitting down to dinner till I joined the party ; and it frequently happened that I did not make my appearance till too late, so that she was made uncomfortable. I here beg her pardon for this and similar transgressions during the whole course of our wedded life. To my beloved sister the same apology is due.

When, from the visit just mentioned, we returned to Town-End, Grasmere, I proceeded with the poem. It may be worth while to note as a caution to others who may cast their eyes on these memoranda, that the skin having been rubbed off my heel by my wearing too tight a shoe, though I desisted from walking, I found that the irritation of the wounded part was kept up

by the act of composition, to a degree that made it necessary to give my constitution a holiday. A rapid cure was the consequence.

Poetic excitement, when accompanied by protracted labour in composition, has throughout my life brought on more or less bodily derangement. Nevertheless I am, at the close of my seventy-third year, in what may be called excellent health. So that intellectual labour is not, necessarily, unfavourable to longevity. But perhaps I ought here to add, that mine has been generally carried on out of doors.

Let me here say a few words of this Poem, by way of criticism. The subject being taken from feudal times has led to its being compared to some of Walter Scott's poems that belong to the same age and state of society. The comparison is inconsiderate. Sir Walter pursued the customary and very natural course of conducting an action, presenting various turns of fortune, to some outstanding point on which the mind might rest as a termination or catastrophe. The course I attempted to pursue is entirely different. Everything that is attempted by the principal personages in the 'White Doe' fails, so far as its object is external and substantial: so far as it is moral and spiritual, it succeeds. The heroine of the poem knows that her duty is not to interfere with the current of events, either to forward or delay them; but—

‘To abide
The shock, and finally secure
O'er pain and grief a triumph pure.’

This she does in obedience to her brother's injunction, as most suitable to a mind and character that, under previous trials, had been proved to accord with his. She achieves this, not without aid from the communication with the inferior creature, which often leads her thoughts to revolve upon the past with a tender and humanising influence that exalts rather than depresses her. The anticipated beatification, if I may so say, of her mind, and the apotheosis of the companion of her solitude, are the points at which the poem aims, and constitute its legitimate catastrophe; far too spiritual a one for instant or widely-spread sympathy, but not therefore the less fitted to make a deep and permanent impression upon that class of minds who think and feel more independently than the many do of the surfaces of things,

and interests transitory because belonging more to the outward and social forms of life than to its internal spirit.

How insignificant a thing, for example, does personal prowess appear, compared with the fortitude of patience and heroic martyrdom; in other words, with struggles for the sake of principle, in preference to victory gloried in for its own sake!

[To these remarks may be added the following, in a letter from the writer to his friend Archdeacon Wrangham:

‘ Thanksgiving Day, Jan. 1816.
Rydal Mount.’

‘ MY DEAR WRANGHAM,

‘ You have given me an additional mark of that friendly disposition, and those affectionate feelings which I have long known you to possess, by writing to me after my long and unjustifiable silence.

‘ Of the “White Doe” I have little to say, but that I hope it will be acceptable to the intelligent, for whom alone it is written. It starts from a high point of imagination, and comes round, through various wanderings of that faculty, to a still higher—nothing less than the apotheosis of the animal who gives the first of the two titles to the poem. And as the poem thus begins and ends with pure and lofty imagination, every motive and impetus that actuates the persons introduced is from the same source; a kindred spirit pervades, and is intended to harmonise the whole. Throughout, objects (the banner, for instance) derive their influence, not from properties inherent in them, not from what they *are* actually in themselves, but from such as are *bestowed* upon them by the minds of those who are conversant with or affected by those objects. Thus the poetry, if there be any in the work, proceeds, as it ought to do, from the *soul of man*, communicating its creative energies to the images of the external world. But, too much of this.

‘ Most faithfully yours,

‘ W. WORDSWORTH.’]*

* *Memoirs*, ii. pp. 57-58.

326. *William Hazlitt's Quotation.*

'Action is transitory.' [Dedication-postscript, ll. 1-6.]

This and the five lines that follow were either read or recited by me, more than thirty years since, to the late Mr. Hazlitt, who quoted some expressions in them (imperfectly remembered) in a work of his published several years ago.

327. *Bolton Abbey.*

'From Bolton's old monastic Tower' (c. i. l. 1).

It is to be regretted that at the present day Bolton Abbey wants this ornament; but the Poem, according to the imagination of the Poet, is composed in Queen Elizabeth's time. 'Formerly,' says Dr. Whitaker, 'over the Transept was a tower. This is proved not only from the mention of bells at the Dissolution, when they could have had no other place, but from the pointed roof of the choir, which must have terminated westward, in some building of superior height to the ridge.'

328. 'When *Lady Aäliza mourned*' (c. i. l. 226).

The detail of this tradition may be found in Dr. Whitaker's book, and in a Poem of this Collection, 'The Force of Prayer :'

'Bare breast I take and an empty hand' (c. ii. l. 179 and onward).

See the Old Ballad—'The Rising of the North.'

328^a. *Brancepeth.*

'Nor joy for you,' &c. (c. iii. l. 1).

Brancepeth Castle stands near the river Were, a few miles from the city of Durham. It formerly belonged to the Nevilles, Earls of Westmoreland. See Dr. Percy's account.

329. *The Battle of the Standard.*

'Of mitred Thurston—what a Host
He conquered' (c. iii. ll. 121-2).

See the Historians for the account of this memorable battle, usually denominated the Battle of the Standard.

330. *Bells of Rylstone* (c. vii. l. 212).

'When the Bells of Rylstone played
Their Sabbath music—"God us ayde!"'

On one of the bells of Rylstone church, which seems coeval with the building of the tower, is this cypher, 'I. N.,' for John Norton, and the motto, 'God us Ayde.'

331. '*The grassy rock-encircled Pound*' (c. vii. l. 253).

After a quotation from Whitaker. I cannot conclude without recommending to the notice of all lovers of beautiful scenery, Bolton Abbey and its neighbourhood. This enchanting spot belongs to the Duke of Devonshire; and the superintendence of it has for some years been entrusted to the Rev. William Carr, who has most skilfully opened out its features; and in whatever he has added, has done justice to the place, by working with an invisible hand of art in the very spirit of Nature.

XIV. ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS.

332. *Ecclesiastical Sonnets in Series.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

During the month of December, 1820, I accompanied a much-beloved and honoured Friend in a walk through different parts of his estate, with a view to fix upon the site of a new Church which he intended to erect. It was one of the most beautiful mornings of a mild season,—our feelings were in harmony with the cherishing influences of the scene; and such being our purpose, we were naturally led to look back upon past events with wonder and gratitude, and on the future with hope. Not long afterwards, some of the Sonnets which will be found towards the close of this series were produced as a private memorial of that morning's occupation.

The Catholic Question, which was agitated in Parliament about that time, kept my thoughts in the same course; and it struck me that certain points in the Ecclesiastical History of our Country might advantageously be presented to view in verse. Accordingly, I took up the subject, and what I now offer to the reader was the result.

When this work was far advanced, I was agreeably surprised

to find that my friend, Mr. Southey, had been engaged with similar views in writing a concise History of the Church in England. If our Productions, thus unintentionally coinciding, shall be found to illustrate each other, it will prove a high gratification to me, which I am sure my friend will participate.

W. WORDSWORTH.

Rydal Mount, January 24, 1822.

For the convenience of passing from one point of the subject to another without shocks of abruptness, this work has taken the shape of a series of Sonnets : but the Reader, it is to be hoped, will find that the pictures are often so closely connected as to have jointly the effect of passages of a poem in a form of stanza to which there is no objection but one that bears upon the Poet only—its difficulty.

333. * *Introductory Remarks.*

My purpose in writing this Series was, as much as possible, to confine my view to the introduction, progress, and operation of the CHURCH in ENGLAND, both previous and subsequent to the Reformation. The Sonnets were written long before Ecclesiastical History and points of doctrine had excited the interest with which they have been recently enquired into and discussed. The former particular is mentioned as an excuse for my having fallen into error in respect to an incident which had been selected as setting forth the height to which the power of the Popedom over temporal sovereignty had attained, and the arrogance with which it was displayed. I allude to the last sonnet but one in the first series, where Pope Alexander the Third, at Venice, is described as setting his foot on the neck of the Emperor Barbarossa. Though this is related as a fact in history, I am told it is a mere legend of no authority. Substitute for it an undeniable truth, not less fitted for my purpose, namely, the penance inflicted by Gregory the Seventh upon the Emperor Henry the Fourth, at [Canosa]. *

Before I conclude my notice of these Sonnets, let me observe that the opinion I pronounced in favour of Laud (long before the Oxford Tract movement), and which had brought censure upon me from several quarters, is not in the least changed. Omit-

* ['According to Baronius the humiliation of the Emperor was a voluntary act of prostration on his part. *Ann. Eccl. ad Ann. 1177.*' *Memoirs*, ii. 111.]

ting here to examine into his conduct in respect to the persecuting spirit with which he has been charged, I am persuaded that most of his aims to restore ritual practices which had been abandoned, were good and wise, whatever errors he might commit in the manner he sometimes attempted to enforce them. I further believe, that had not he, and others who shared his opinions and felt as he did, stood up in opposition to the Reformers of that period, it is questionable whether the Church would ever have recovered its lost ground, and become the blessing it now is, and will, I trust, become in a still greater degree, both to those of its communion, and those who unfortunately are separated from it :

'I saw the Figure of a lovely Maid.' [Sonnet i. Part III.]

When I came to this part of the Series I had the dream described in this sonnet. The figure was that of my daughter, and the whole past exactly as here represented. The sonnet was composed on the middle road leading from Grasmere to Ambleside : it was begun as I left the last house in the vale, and finished, word for word, as it now stands, before I came in view of Rydal. I wish I could say the same of the five or six hundred I have written : most of them were frequently retouched in the course of composition, and not a few laboriously.

I have only further to observe that the intended church which prompted these Sonnets was erected on Coleorton Moor, towards the centre of a very populous parish, between three and four miles from Ashby-de-la-Zouch, on the road to Loughborough, and has proved, I believe, a great benefit to the neighbourhood.

[POSTSCRIPT.]

As an addition to these general remarks on the 'Ecclesiastical Sonnets,' it seems only right to give here from the *Memoirs* (vol. ii. p. 113) the following on Sonnet XL. (Pt. II.) :

‘With what entire affection did they prize
Their *new-born* Church !’

The invidious inferences that would be drawn from this epithet by the enemies of the English Church and Reformation are too obvious to be dilated on. The author was aware of this, and in reply to a friend who called his attention to the misconstruction and perversion to which the passage was liable, he replied as follows :

' Nov. 12. 1846.

' MY DEAR C——,

' The passage which you have been so kind as to comment upon in one of the "Ecclesiastical Sonnets," was altered several years ago by my pen, in a copy of my poems which I possess, but the correction was not printed till a place was given it in the last edition, printed last year, in one volume. It there stands,

"Their church reformed."

Though for my own part, as I mentioned some time since in a letter I had occasion to write to the Bishop of ——, I do not like the term *reformed*; if taken in its literal sense, as a *transformation*, it is very objectionable.

' Yours affectionately,

' W. WORDSWORTH.'

Further, on the Sonnets on 'Aspects of Christianity in America,' Wordsworth wrote to his valued friend, Professor Reed of Philadelphia, as follows :

' A few days ago, after a very long interval, I returned to poetical composition; and my first employment was to write a couple of sonnets upon subjects recommended by you to take place in the Ecclesiastical Series. They are upon the Marriage Ceremony and the Funeral Service. I have also, at the same time, added two others, one upon Visiting the Sick, and the other upon the Thanksgiving of Women after Childbirth, both subjects taken from the Services of our Liturgy. To the second part of the same series, I have also added two, in order to do more justice to the Papal Church for the services which she did actually render to Christianity and humanity in the Middle Ages. By the by, the sonnet beginning, "Men of the Western World," &c. was slightly altered after I sent it to you, not in the hope of substituting a better verse, but merely to avoid the repetition of the same word, "book," which occurs as a rhyme in "The Pilgrim Fathers." These three sonnets, I learn, from several quarters, have been well received by those of your countrymen whom they most concern.]'

* Extract : September 4th, 1842: *Memoirs*, ii. 389-90.

PART I. FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO BRITAIN TO THE
CONSUMMATION OF THE PAPAL DOMINION.

334. *St. Paul never in Britain.*

‘Did holy Paul,’ &c. [Sonnet II. l. 6.]

Stillingfleet adduces many arguments in support of this opinion, but they are unconvincing. The latter part of this Sonnet (II. ‘Conjectures’) refers to a favourite notion of Roman Catholic writers, that Joseph of Arimathea and his companions brought Christianity into Britain, and built a rude church at Glastonbury; alluded to hereafter in a passage upon the dissolution of monasteries.

335. *Water-fowl.* [Sonnet III. l. 1.]

‘Screams round the Arch-druid’s brow the sea-mew.’

This water-fowl was among the Druids an emblem of those traditions connected with the deluge that made an important part of their mysteries. The cormorant was a bird of bad omen.

336. *Hill at St. Alban’s: Bede.*

‘That hill, whose flowery platform,’ &c. [Sonnet VI. l. 13.]

This hill at St. Alban’s must have been an object of great interest to the imagination of the venerable Bede, who thus describes it, with a delicate feeling delightful to meet with in that rude age, traces of which are frequent in his works:—‘Variis herbarum floribus depictus imo usquequaque vestitus, in quo nihil repente arduum, nihil praeceps, nihil abruptum, quem lateribus longe lateque deductum in modum aequoris natura complanat, dignum videlicet eum pro insitâ sibi specie venustatis jam olim reddens, qui beati martyris canore dicaretur.’

337. *Hallelujahs.*

‘Nor wants the cause the panic-striking aid
Of hallelujahs.’ [Sonnet XI. ll. 1-2.]

Alluding to the victory gained under Germanus. See Bede.

338. *Samuel Daniel and Thomas Fuller.* [Ibid. ll. 9-10.]

‘By men yet scarcely conscious of a care
For other monuments than those of earth.’

The last six lines of this Sonnet are chiefly from the prose of Daniel ; and here I will state (though to the Readers whom this Poem will chiefly interest it is unnecessary) that my obligations to other prose writers are frequent,—obligations which, even if I had not a pleasure in courting, it would have been presumptuous to shun, in treating an historical subject. I must, however, particularise Fuller, to whom I am indebted in the Sonnet upon Wycliffe and in other instances. And upon the acquittal of the Seven Bishops I have done little more than verify a lively description of that event in the ms. Memoirs of the first Lord Lonsdale.

339. *Monastery of Old Bangor.* [Sonnet xii.]

After a quotation from Turner’s ‘valuable History of the Anglo-Saxons.’ Taliesen was present at the battle which preceded this desolation. The account Bede gives of this remarkable event, suggests a most striking warning against National and Religious prejudices.

340. *Paulinus.* [Sonnet xv.]

The person of Paulinus is thus described by Bede, from the memory of an eye-witness : ‘Longae statura, paululum incurvus, nigro capillo, facie macilentâ, naso adunco, pertenui, venerabilis simul et terribilis aspectu.’

341. *King Edwin and the Sparrow.*

‘Man’s life is like a sparrow.’ [Sonnet xvi. l. 1.]

See the original of this speech in Bede.—The Conversion of Edwin, as related by him, is highly interesting—and the breaking up of this Council accompanied with an event so striking and characteristic, that I am tempted to give it at length in a translation. ‘Who, exclaimed the King, when the Council was ended, shall first desecrate the altars and the temples ? I, answered the Chief Priest ; for who more fit than myself, through

the wisdom which the true God hath given me, to destroy, for the good example of others, what in foolishness is worshipped ? Immediately, casting away vain superstition, he besought the King to grant him what the laws did not allow to a priest, arms and a courser (*equum emissarium*) ; which mounting, and furnished with a sword and lance, he proceeded to destroy the Idols. The crowd, seeing this, thought him mad—he however halted not, but, approaching the profaned temple, casting against it the lance which he had held in his hand, and, exulting in acknowledgment of the worship of the true God, he ordered his companions to pull down the temple, with all its enclosures. The place is shown where those idols formerly stood, not far from York, at the source of the river Derwent, and is at this day called Gormund Gaham ubi pontifex ille, inspirante Deo vero, polluit ac destruxit eas, *quas ipse sacraverat aras.*' The last expression is a pleasing proof that the venerable monk of Wearmouth was familiar with the poetry of Virgil.

342. ‘*Near fresh Streams.*’ [Sonnet xvii. l. 12.]

The early propagators of Christianity were accustomed to preach near rivers for the convenience of baptism.

343. *The Clergy.* [Sonnet xix.]

Having spoken of the zeal, disinterestedness, and temperance of the clergy of those times, Bede thus proceeds :—‘ Unde et in magna erat veneratione tempore illo religionis habitus, ita ut ubique clericus aliquis, aut monachus aveniret, gaudentur ab omnibus tanquam Dei famulus exciperetur. Etiam si in itinere pergens inveniretur, accurrebant, et flexâ cervice, vel manu signari, vel ore illius se benedici, gaudebant. Verbis quoque horum exhortatoriis diligenter auditum praebebant.’—Lib. iii. cap. 26.

343^a. *Bede.* [Sonnet xxiii. l. 14.]

He expired dictating the last words of a translation of St. John’s Gospel.

344. *Zeal.*

‘ The people work like congregated bees !’ [Sonnet xxiv. l. 2.]

See in Turner’s History, vol. iii. p. 528, the account of the erection of Ramsey Monastery. Penances were removable by the performance of acts of charity and benevolence.

345. *Alfred.*

— ‘pain narrows not his cares.’ [Sonnet xxvi. l. 10.]

Through the whole of his life, Alfred was subject to grievous maladies.

346. *Crown and Cowl.*

‘Woe to the Crown that doth the Cowl obey.’ [Sonnet xxxix. l. 1.]

The violent measures carried on under the influence of Dunstan, for strengthening the Benedictine Order, were a leading cause of the second series of Danish invasions. See Turner.

347. *The Council of Clermont.*

— ‘in awe-stricken countries far and nigh . . . that voice resounds.
[Sonnet xxxiii. ll. 13-14.]

The decision of this Council was believed to be instantly known in remote parts of Europe.

PART II. TO THE CLOSE OF THE TROUBLES IN THE REIGN OF CHARLES I.

348. *Cistercian Monastery.* [Sonnet iii.]

‘Here man more purely lives,’ &c.

‘Bonum est nos hic esse, quia homo vivit purius, cadit rarius, surgit velocius, incedit cautius, quiescit securius, moritur felicius, purgatur utius, praemiatur copiosius.’—Bernard.

‘This sentence,’ says Dr. Whitaker, ‘is usually inscribed in some conspicuous part of the Cistercian houses.’

349. *Waldenses.*

‘Whom obloquy pursues with hideous bark.’ [Sonnet xiv. l. 8.]

The list of foul names bestowed upon those poor creatures is long and curious ;—and, as is, alas ! too natural, most of the opprobrious appellations are drawn from circumstances into which they were forced by their persecutors, who even consolidated their miseries into one reproachful term, calling them Patarenians, or Paturins, from *pati*, to suffer.

Dwellers with wolves, she names them, for the pine
And green oak are their covert; as the gloom

Of night oft foils their enemy's design,
 She calls them Riders on the flying broom ;
 Sorcerers, whose frame and aspect have become
 One and the same through practices malign.

350. *Borrowed Lines.*

' And the green lizard and the gilded newt
 Lead unmolested lives, and die of age.' [Sonnet xxi. ll. 7-8.]

These two lines are adopted from a ms., written about 1770, which accidentally fell into my possession. The close of the preceding Sonnet 'On Monastic Voluptuousness' is taken from the same source, as is the verse, 'Where Venus sits,' &c., and the line, 'Once ye were holy, ye are holy still,' in a subsequent Sonnet.

351. *Transfiguration.*

' One (like those prophets whom God sent of old)
 Transfigured,' &c. [Sonnet xxxiv. ll. 4-5.]

' M. Latimer suffered his keeper very quietly to pull off his hose, and his other array, which to looke unto was very simple : and being stripped unto his shrowd, he seemed as comely a person to them that were present, as one should lightly see : and whereas in his clothes hee appeared a withered and crooked sillie (weak) olde man, he now stood bolt upright, as comely a father as one might lightly behold. . . . Then they brought a faggotte, kindled with fire, and laid the same downe at doctor Ridley's feete. To whome M. Latimer spake in this manner, " Bee of good comfort, master Ridley, and play the man : wee shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England, as I trust shall never bee put out." —*Fox's Acts, &c.*

Similar alterations in the outward figure and deportment of persons brought to like trial were not uncommon. See note to the above passage in Dr. Wordsworth's Ecclesiastical Biography, for an example in an humble Welsh fisherman.

352. *Craft.*

— ' craftily incites
 The overweening, personates the mad.' [Sonnet xli. l. 11.]

A common device in religious and political conflicts. See Strype in support of this instance.

353. *The Virgin Mountain.* [Sonnet XLIII.]

Jung-frau.

354. *Laud.* [Sonnet XLV.]

In this age a word cannot be said in praise of Laud, or even in compassion for his fate, without incurring a charge of bigotry; but fearless of such imputation, I concur with Hume, ‘that it is sufficient for his vindication to observe that his errors were the most excusable of all those which prevailed during that zealous period.’ A key to the right understanding of those parts of his conduct that brought the most odium upon him in his own time, may be found in the following passage of his speech before the bar of the House of Peers:—‘Ever since I came in place, I have laboured nothing more than that the external publick worship of God, so much slighted in divers parts of this kingdom, might be preserved, and that with as much decency and uniformity as might be. For I evidently saw that the publick neglect of God’s service in the outward face of it, and the nasty lying of many places dedicated to that service, *had almost cast a damp upon the true and inward worship of God, which while we live in the body, needs external helps, and all little enough to keep it in any vigour.*’

PART III. FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE PRESENT TIME.

355. *The Pilgrim Fathers.* [Sonnet XIII.]

American episcopacy, in union with the church in England, strictly belongs to the general subject; and I here make my acknowledgments to my American friends, Bishop Doane, and Mr. Henry Reed of Philadelphia, for having suggested to me the propriety of adverting to it, and pointed out the virtues and intellectual qualities of Bishop White, which so eminently fitted him for the great work he undertook. Bishop White was consecrated at Lambeth, Feb. 4, 1787, by Archbishop Moor; and before his long life was closed, twenty-six bishops had been consecrated in America, by himself. For his character and opinions, see his own numerous Works, and a ‘Sermon in commemoration of him, by George Washington Doane, Bishop of New Jersey.’

356. *The Clergyman.*

'A genial hearth——
And a refined rusticity, belong
To the neat mansion.' [Sonnet xviii. ll. 1-3.]

Among the benefits arising, as Mr. Coleridge has well observed, from a Church Establishment of endowments corresponding with the wealth of the country to which it belongs, may be reckoned as eminently important, the examples of civility and refinement which the Clergy stationed at intervals, afford to the whole people. The Established clergy in many parts of England have long been, as they continue to be, the principal bulwark against barbarism, and the link which unites the sequestered peasantry with the intellectual advancement of the age. Nor is it below the dignity of the subject to observe, that their taste, as acting upon rural residences and scenery often furnishes models which country gentlemen, who are more at liberty to follow the caprices of fashion, might profit by. The precincts of an old residence must be treated by ecclesiastics with respect, both from prudence and necessity. I remember being much pleased, some years ago, at Rose Castle, the rural seat of the See of Carlisle, with a style of garden and architecture, which, if the place had belonged to a wealthy layman, would no doubt have been swept away. A parsonage-house generally stands not far from the church; this proximity imposes favourable restraints, and sometimes suggests an affecting union of the accommodations and elegances of life with the outward signs of piety and mortality. With pleasure I recal to mind a happy instance of this in the residence of an old and much-valued Friend in Oxfordshire. The house and church stand parallel to each other, at a small distance; a circular lawn or rather grass-plot, spreads between them; shrubs and trees curve from each side of the dwelling, veiling, but not hiding, the church. From the front of this dwelling, no part of the burial-ground is seen; but as you wind by the side of the shrubs towards the steeple-end of the church, the eye catches a single, small, low, monumental headstone, moss-grown, sinking into, and gently inclining towards the earth. Advance, and the churchyard, populous and gay with glittering tombstones, opens upon the view. This humble

and beautiful parsonage called forth a tribute, for which see the seventh of the ‘Miscellaneous Sonnets,’ Part III.

357. *Rush-bearing.* [Sonnet xxxii.]

This is still continued in many churches in Westmoreland. It takes place in the month of July, when the floor of the stalls is strewn with fresh rushes; and hence it is called the ‘Rush-bearing.’

358. *George Dyer.*

‘Teaching us to forget them or forgive.’ [Sonnet xxxv. l. 10.]

This is borrowed from an affecting passage in Mr. George Dyer’s History of Cambridge.

359. *Apprehension.*

———‘had we, like them, endured
Sore stress of apprehension.’ [Sonnet xxxvii. l. 6.]

See Burnet, who is unusually animated on this subject; the east wind, so anxiously expected and prayed for, was called the ‘Protestant wind.’

360. *The Cross.*

‘Yet will we not conceal the precious Cross,
Like men ashamed.’ [Sonnet xl. ll. 9-10.]

The Lutherans have retained the Cross within their churches: it is to be regretted that we have not done the same.

361. *Monte Rosa.*

‘Or like the Alpine Mount, that takes its name
From roseate hues,’ &c. [Sonnet xlvi. ll. 5-6.]

Some say that Monte Rosa takes its name from a belt of rock at its summit—a very unpoetical and scarcely a probable supposition.

XV. 'YARROW REVISITED,' AND OTHER POEMS.

COMPOSED (TWO EXCEPTED) DURING A TOUR IN SCOTLAND, AND ON THE ENGLISH BORDER, IN THE AUTUMN OF 1831.

362. *Dedication.*

To SAMUEL ROGERS, Esq.

As a testimony of friendship, and acknowledgment of intellectual obligations,
these Memorials are affectionately inscribed.

Rydal Mount, Dec. 11, 1834.

The following stanzas ['Yarrow Revisited'] are a memorial of a day passed with Sir Walter Scott, and other friends, visiting the banks of the Yarrow under his guidance, immediately before his departure from Abbotsford for Naples.

The title 'Yarrow Revisited' will stand in no need of explanation, for Readers acquainted with the Author's previous poems suggested by that celebrated stream.

363. * *Yarrow Revisited.*

I first became acquainted with this great and amiable man (Sir Walter Scott) in the year 1803, when my sister and I, making a tour in Scotland, were hospitably received by him in Lasswade, upon the banks of the Esk, where he was then living. We saw a good deal of him in the course of the following week. The particulars are given in my sister's journal of that tour.

(2) * *Ibid.*

In the autumn of 1831, my daughter and I set off from Rydal to visit Sir Walter Scott, before his departure for Italy. This journey had been delayed, by an inflammation in my eyes, till we found that the time appointed for his leaving home would be too near for him to receive us without considerable inconvenience. Nevertheless, we proceeded, and reached Abbotsford on Monday. I was then scarcely able to lift up my eyes to the light. How sadly changed did I find him from the man I had seen so healthy, gay, and hopeful a few years before, when he said at the inn at Paterdale, in my presence, his daughter Anne also being there, with Mr. Lockhart, my own wife and daughter, and Mr. Quillinan, 'I mean to live till I am eighty, and shall write as long as I live.' Though we had none of us the least thought of the

cloud of misfortune which was then going to break upon his head, I was startled, and almost shocked, at that bold saying, which could scarcely be uttered by such a man, sanguine as he was, without a momentary forgetfulness of the instability of human life. But to return to Abbotsford. The inmates and guests we found there were Sir Walter, Major Scott, Anne Scott, and Mr. and Mrs. Lockhart; Mr. Liddell, his lady and brother, and Mr. Allan, the painter, and Mr. Laidlaw, a very old friend of Sir Walter's. One of Burns's sons, an officer in the Indian service, had left the house a day or two before, and had kindly expressed his regret that he could not wait my arrival, a regret that I may truly say was mutual. In the evening, Mr. and Mrs. Liddell sang, and Mrs. Lockhart chaunted old ballads to her harp; and Mr. Allan, hanging over the back of a chair, told and acted odd stories in a humorous way. With this exhibition, and his daughter's singing, Sir Walter was much amused, and, indeed, were we all, as far as circumstances would allow. But what is most worthy of mention is the admirable demeanour of Major Scott during that evening.* He had much to suffer from the sight of his father's infirmities and from the great change that was about to take place at the residence he had built, and where he had long lived in so much prosperity and happiness. But what struck me most was the patient kindness with which he supported himself under the many fretful expressions that his sister Anne addressed to him or uttered in his hearing, and she, poor thing, as mistress of that house, had been subject, after her mother's death, to a heavier load of care and responsibility, and greater sacrifices of time, than one of such a constitution of body and mind was able to bear. Of this Dora and I were made so sensible, that as soon as we had crossed the Tweed on our departure, we gave vent at the same moment to our apprehensions that her brain would fail and she would go out of her mind, or that she would sink under the trials she had passed and those which awaited her.

On Tuesday morning, Sir Walter Scott accompanied us, and most of the party, to Newark Castle, on the *Yarrow*. When we alighted from the carriages, he walked pretty stoutly, and had great pleasure in revisiting these his favourite haunts. Of that

* [In pencil—This is a mistake, dear Father. It was the following evening, when the Liddells were gone, and only ourselves and Mr. Allan present.]

excursion, the verses, ‘Yarrow Revisited’ are a memorial. Notwithstanding the romance that pervades Sir Walter’s works, and attaches to many of his habits, there is too much pressure of fact for these verses to harmonise, as much as I could wish, with the two preceding poems. On our return in the afternoon, we had to cross the Tweed, directly opposite Abbotsford. The wheels of our carriage grated upon the pebbles in the bed of the stream, that there flows somewhat rapidly. A rich, but sad light, of rather a purple than a golden hue, was spread over the Eildon Hills at that moment; and, thinking it probable that it might be the last time Sir Walter would cross the stream, I was not a little moved, and expressed some of my feelings in the sonnet beginning,

‘A trouble, not of clouds,’ &c.

At noon on Thursday we left Abbotsford, and on the morning of that day, Sir Walter and I had a serious conversation, *tête-à-tête*, when he spoke with gratitude of the happy life which, upon the whole, he had led. He had written in my daughter’s album, before he came into the breakfast-room that morning, a few stanzas addressed to her; and while putting the book into her hand, in his own Study, standing by his desk, he said to her in my presence, ‘I should not have done any thing of this kind, but for your father’s sake; they are probably the last verses I shall ever write.’ They show how much his mind was impaired; not by the strain of thought, but by the execution, some of the lines being imperfect, and one stanza wanting corresponding rhymes. One letter, the initial S., had been omitted in the spelling of his own name. In this interview, also, it was that, upon my expressing a hope of his health being benefited by the climate of the country to which he was going, and by the interest he would take in the classic remembrances of Italy, he made use of the quotation from ‘Yarrow Revisited,’ as recorded by me in the ‘Musings at Aquapendente,’ six years afterwards.

Mr. Lockhart has mentioned in his life of him, what I heard from several quarters while abroad, both at Rome and elsewhere, that little seemed to interest him but what he could collect or heard of the fugitive Stuarts, and their adherents who had followed them into exile. Both the ‘Yarrow Revisited’ and the ‘Sonnet’ were sent him before his departure from England. Some further particulars of the conversations which occurred

during this visit I should have set down, had they not been already accurately recorded by Mr. Lockhart.

364. * *A Place of Burial in the South of Scotland.* [III.]

Similar places for burial are not unfrequent in Scotland. The one that suggested this sonnet lies on the banks of a small stream, called the Wauchope, that flows into the Esk near Langholme. Mickle, who, as it appears from his poem on Sir Martin, was not without genuine poetic feelings, was born and passed his boyhood in this neighbourhood, under his father, who was a minister of the Scotch Kirk. The Esk, both above and below Langholme, flows through a beautiful country; and the two streams of the Wauchope and the Ewes, which join it near that place, are such as a pastoral poet would delight in.

365. * *On the Sight of a Manse in the South of Scotland.* [iv.]

The manses in Scotland, and the gardens and grounds about them, have seldom that attractive appearance which is common about our English parsonages, even when the clergyman's income falls below the average of the Scotch minister's. This is not merely owing to the one country being poor in comparison with the other, but arises rather out of the equality of their benefices, so that no one has enough to spare for decorations that might serve as an example for others, whereas with us the taste of the richer incumbent extends its influence more or less to the poorest.

After all, in these observations, the surface only of the matter is touched. I once heard a conversation, in which the Roman Catholic religion was decried on account of its abuses: 'You cannot deny, however,' said a lady of the party, repeating an expression used by Charles II., 'that it is the religion of a gentleman.' It may be left to the Scotch themselves to determine how far this observation applies to the [religion] of their Kirk; while it cannot be denied [that] if it is wanting in that characteristic quality, the aspect of common life, so far as concerns its beauty, must suffer. Sincere Christian piety may be thought not to stand in need of refinement or studied ornament, but assuredly it is ever ready to adopt them, when they fall within its notice, as means allow: and this observation applies not only to manners, but to everything that a Christian (truly

so in spirit) cultivates and gathers round him, however humble his social condition.

366. * *Composed in Roslin Chapel during a Storm.* [v.]

We were detained, by incessant rain and storm, at the small inn near Roslin Chapel, and I passed a great part of the day pacing to and fro in this beautiful structure, which, though not used for public service, is not allowed to go to ruin. Here this sonnet was composed, and [I shall be fully satisfied] if it has at all done justice to the feeling which the place and the storm raging without inspired. I was as a prisoner. A Painter delineating the interior of the chapel and its minute features, under such circumstances, would have no doubt found his time agreeably shortened. But the movements of the mind must be more free while dealing with words than with lines and colours. Such, at least, was then, and has been on many other occasions, my belief; and as it is allotted to few to follow both arts with success, I am grateful to my own calling for this and a thousand other recommendations which are denied to that of the Painter.

367. * *The Trosachs.* [vi.]

As recorded in my Sister's Journal, I had first seen the Trosachs in her and Coleridge's company. The sentiment that runs through this sonnet was natural to the season in which I again saw this beautiful spot; but this, and some other sonnets that follow, were coloured by the remembrance of my recent visit to Sir Walter Scott, and the melancholy errand on which he was going.

368. * *Composed in the Glen of Lock Etive.* [viii.]

'That make the patriot spirit.'

It was mortifying to have frequent occasions to observe the bitter hatred of the lower orders of the Highlanders to their superiors; love of country seemed to have passed into its opposite. Emigration was the only relief looked to with hope.

369. *Eagles: composed at Dunollie Castle in the Bay of Oban.* [ix.]

The last I saw was on the wing, off the promontory of

Fairhead, county of Antrim. I mention this, because, though my tour in Ireland, with Mr. Marshall and his son, was made many years ago, this allusion to the eagle is the only image supplied by it to the poetry I have since written. We travelled through the country in October; and to the shortness of the days, and the speed with which we travelled (in a carriage-and-four), may be ascribed this want of notices, in my verse, of a country so interesting. The deficiency I am somewhat ashamed of, and it is the more remarkable, as contrasted with my Scotch and continental tours, of which are to be found in these volumes so many memorials.

370. * *In the Sound of Mull.* [x.]

Touring late in the season in Scotland is an uncertain speculation. We were detained a week by rain at Bunaw, on Loch Etive, in a vain hope that the weather would clear up, and allow me to show my daughter the beauties of Glencoe. Two days we were at the Isle of Mull, on a visit to Major Campbell; but it rained incessantly, and we were obliged to give up our intention of going to Staffa. The rain pursued us to Tyndrum, where the next sonnet was composed in a storm.

371. ‘*Shepherds of Etive Glen.*’ [x.]

In Gaelic—Buachaill Eite.

372. *Highland Broach.* [xv.]

On ascending a hill that leads from Loch Awe towards Inverary, I fell into conversation with a woman of the humbler class, who wore one of these Highland broaches. I talked with her about it, and upon parting with her, when I said, with a kindness I truly felt, ‘ May the broach continue in your family for many generations to come, as you have already possessed it,’ she thanked me most becomingly, and seemed not a little moved. The exact resemblance which the old broach (still in use, though rarely met with among the Highlanders) bears to the Roman Fibula must strike every one, and concurs, with the plaid and kilt, to recal to mind the communication which the ancient Romans had with this remote country.

[Foot-note.—How much the Broach is sometimes prized by persons in humble stations may be gathered from an occurrence

mentioned to me by a female friend. She had an opportunity of benefiting a poor old woman in her own hut, who, wishing to make a return, said to her daughter in Erse, in a tone of plaintive earnestness, ‘I would give anything I have, but I *hope* she does not wish for my Broach !’ and uttering these words she put her hand upon the Broach which fastened her kerchief, and which she imagined had attracted the eye of her benefactress.]

373. *The Brownie.* [xvi.]

Upon a small island not far from the head of Loch Lomond, are some remains of an ancient building, which was for several years the abode of a solitary Individual, one of the last survivors of the clan of Macfarlane, once powerful in that neighbourhood. Passing along the shore opposite this island in the year 1814, the Author learned these particulars, and that this person then living there had acquired the appellation of ‘The Brownie.’ See ‘The Brownie’s Cell’ [‘Memorials of a Tour in Scotland, 1814,’ i.], to which the following is a sequel.

374. * *Bothwell Castle.* [xviii.]

In my Sister’s Journal is an account of Bothwell Castle as it appeared to us at that time.

375. * *The Avon : a Feeder of the Avon.* [xx. 1. 2.]

‘Yet is it one that other rivulets bear.’

There is the Shakspeare Avon, the Bristol Avon, the one that flows by Salisbury, and a small river in Wales, I believe, bear the name; Avon being, in the ancient tongue, the general name for river.

376. * *Suggested by a View from an Eminence in Inglewood Forest.* [xxi.]

The extensive forest of Inglewood has been enclosed within my memory. I was well acquainted with it in its ancient state. The Hartshorn tree, mentioned in the next sonnet, was one of its remarkable objects, as well as another tree that grew upon an eminence not far from Penrith. It was single and conspicuous, and, being of a round shape, though it was universally known to be a ‘sycamore,’ it was always called the ‘Round Thorn,’ so difficult is it to chain fancy down to fact.

377. *Hart's-Horn Tree, near Penrith.* [xxii.]

[After a quotation from Nicholson and Burns's History of Westmoreland and Cumberland.] The tree has now disappeared, but I well remember its imposing appearance as it stood, in a decayed state, by the side of the high road leading from Penrith to Appleby. The whole neighbourhood abounds in interesting traditions and vestiges of antiquity, viz., Julian's Bower ; Brougham and Penrith Castles; Penrith Beacon, and the curious remains in Penrith Churchyard ; Arthur's Round Table, and, close by, Maybrough ; the excavation, called the Giant's Cave, on the banks of the Emont ; Long Meg and her daughters, near Eden, &c., &c.

378. *Fancy and Tradition.* [xxiii.]

Suggested by the recollection of Juliana's bower and other traditions connected with this ancient forest.

379. *Countess' Pillar.* [xxiv.]

On the roadside between Penrith and Appleby there stands a pillar with the following inscription :—

' This pillar was erected in the year 1656, by Anne Countess Dowager of Pembroke, &c. for a memorial of her last parting with her pious mother, Margaret Countess Dowager of Cumberland, on the 2d April, 1616; in memory whereof she hath left an annuity of £4, to be distributed to the poor of the parish of Brougham, every 2d day of April for ever, upon the stone table placed hard by. *Laus Deo!*'

XVI. EVENING VOLUNTARIES.

380. *Lines composed on a high part of the coast of Cumberland, Easter Sunday, April 7th, the Author's sixty-third birthday.* [II.]

The lines were composed on the road between Moresby and Whitehaven, while I was on a visit to my son, then rector of Moresby. This succession of Voluntaries, with the exception of the 8th and 9th, originated in the concluding lines of the last paragraph of this poem. With this coast I have been familiar from my earliest childhood, and remember being struck for the

first time by the town and port of Whitehaven, and the white waves breaking against its quays and piers, as the whole came into view from the top of the high ground down which the road,—which has since been altered,—then descended abruptly. My sister, when she first heard the voice of the sea from this point, and beheld the scene spread before her, burst into tears. Our family then lived at Cockermouth, and this fact was often mentioned among us as indicating the sensibility for which she was so remarkable.

381. * *By the Sea-side.* [III.]

These lines were suggested during my residence under my son's roof at Moresby on the coast near Whitehaven, at the time when I was composing those verses among the Evening Voluntaries that have reference to the Sea. In some future edition I purpose to place it among that class of poems. It was in that neighbourhood I first became acquainted with the ocean and its appearances and movements. My infancy and early childhood were passed at Cockermouth, about eight miles from the coast, and I well remember that mysterious awe with which I used to listen to anything said about storms and shipwrecks. Sea-shells of many descriptions were common in the town, and I was not a little surprised when I heard Mr. Landor had denounced me as a Plagiarist from himself for having described a boy applying a sea-shell to his ear, and listening to it for intimation of what was going on in its native element. This I had done myself scores of times, and it was a belief among us that we could know from the sound whether the tide was ebbing or flowing.

382. *Not in the lucid intervals of life.* [iv.]

The lines following, ‘Nor do words,’ &c., were written with Lord Byron’s character as a poet before me, and that of others among his contemporaries, who wrote under like influences.

383. *The leaves that rustled on this oak-crowned hill.* [vii.]

Composed by the side of Grasmere Lake. The mountains that enclose the vale, especially towards Easedale, are most favourable to the reverberation of sound: there is a passage in ‘The Excursion,’ towards the close of the 4th book, where the voice of the raven in flight is traced through the modifications

it undergoes, as I have often heard it in that vale and others of this district.

384. *Impromptu.* [VIII.]

This Impromptu appeared, many years ago, among the Author's Poems, from which, in subsequent editions, it was excluded. It is reprinted at the request of the Friend in whose presence the lines were thrown off.

384^a. * *Ibid.*

Reprinted at the request of my Sister, in whose presence the lines were thrown off.

385. * *Composed upon an Evening of extraordinary Splendour and Beauty.* [IX.]

Felt, and in a great measure composed, upon the little mount in front of our abode at Rydal. In concluding my notices of this class of poems it may be as well to observe, that among the Miscellaneous Sonnets are a few alluding to morning impressions, which might be read with mutual benefit in connection with these Evening Voluntaries. See for example that one on Westminster Bridge, that on May 2d, on the song of the Thrush, and the one beginning 'While beams of orient light.'

386. *Alston: American Painter.*

'Wings at my shoulder seem to play' (ix. iii. l. 9).

In these lines I am under obligation to the exquisite picture of 'Jacob's Dream,' by Mr. Alston, now in America. It is pleasant to make this public acknowledgment to a man of genius, whom I have the honour to rank among my friends.

387. *Mountain-ridges.* [*Ibid.* iv. l. 20.]

The multiplication of mountain-ridges, described at the commencement of the third stanza of this Ode as a kind of Jacob's Ladder, leading to Heaven, is produced either by watery vapours or sunny haze; in the present instance by the latter cause. Allusions to the Ode, entitled 'Intimations of Immortality,' pervade the last stanza of the foregoing Poem.

XVII. POEMS COMPOSED OR SUGGESTED DURING A TOUR
IN THE SUMMER OF 1833.

388. *Advertisement.*

Having been prevented by the lateness of the season, in 1831, from visiting Staffa and Iona, the author made these the principal objects of a short tour in the summer of 1833, of which the following series of poems is a Memorial. The course pursued was down the Cumberland river Derwent, and to Whitehaven; thence (by the Isle of Man, where a few days were passed,) up the Frith of Clyde to Greenock, then to Oban, Staffa, Iona, and back towards England by Loch Awe, Inverary, Loch Goil-head, Greenock, and through parts of Renfrewshire, Ayrshire, and Dumfriesshire to Carlisle, and thence up the River Eden, and homeward by Ullswater.

389. *The Greta.*

'But if thou, like Coeytus,' &c. (iv. l. 5).

Many years ago, when I was at Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, the hostess of the inn, proud of her skill in etymology, said, that 'the name of the river was taken from the *bridge*, the form of which, as every one must notice, exactly resembled a great A.' Dr. Whitaker has derived it from the word of common occurrence in the north of England, '*to greet*,' signifying to lament aloud, mostly with weeping; a conjecture rendered more probable from the stony and rocky channel of both the Cumberland and Yorkshire rivers. The Cumberland Greta, though it does not, among the country people, take up *that* name till within three miles of its disappearance in the river Derwent, may be considered as having its source in the mountain cove of Wythburn, and flowing through Thirlmere, the beautiful features of which lake are known only to those who, travelling between Grasmere and Keswick, have quitted the main road in the vale of Wythburn, and, crossing over to the opposite side of the lake, have proceeded with it on the right hand.

The channel of the Greta, immediately above Keswick, has, for the purposes of building, been in a great measure cleared of the immense stones which, by their concussion in high floods, produced the loud and awful noises described in the sonnet.

‘The scenery upon this river,’ says Mr. Southey in his *Colloquies*, ‘where it passes under the woody side of Latrigg, is of the finest and most rememberable kind :

———“ambiguo lapsu refluitque fluitque,
Occurrensque sibi venturas aspicit undas.”

390. *Brigham Church.*

‘By hooded votaresses,’ &c. (viii. l. 11).

Attached to the church of Brigham was formerly a chantry, which held a moiety of the manor; and in the decayed parsonage some vestiges of monastic architecture are still to be seen.

391. * *Nun’s Well, Brigham.* [viii.]

So named from the Religious House which stood close by. I have rather an odd anecdote to relate of the Nun’s Well. One day the landlady of a public house, a field’s length from it, on the road-side, said to me, ‘You have been to see the Nun’s Well, sir.’ ‘The Nun’s Well! What is that?’ said the postman, who in his royal livery stopt his mail-car at the door. The landlady and I explained to him what the name meant, and what sort of people the nuns were. A countryman who was standing by rather tipsy stammered out, ‘Ay, those Nuns were good people; they are gone, but we shall soon have them back again.’ The Reform mania was just then at its height.

392. * *To a Friend.* [ix.]

‘Pastor and Patriot.’

My son John, who was then building a parsonage on his small living at Brigham.

393. *Mary Queen of Scots landing at Workington.* [x.]

‘The fears and impatience of Mary were so great,’ says Robertson, ‘that she got into a fisher-boat, and with about twenty attendants landed at Workington, in Cumberland; and thence she was conducted with many marks of respect to Carlisle.’ The apartment in which the Queen had slept at Workington Hall (where she was received by Sir Henry Curwen as became her rank and misfortunes) was long preserved, out of respect to her memory, as she had left it; and one cannot but

regret that some necessary alterations in the mansion could not be effected without its destruction.

394. * *Mary Queen of Scots.* [x.]

‘ Bright as a star.’

I will mention for the sake of the friend who is writing down these Notes that it was among the fine Scotch firs near Ambleside, and particularly those near Green Bank, that I have over and over again paused at the sight of this image. Long may they stand to afford a like gratification to others ! This wish is not uncalled for—several of their brethren having already disappeared.

N.B. The poem of St. Bees to follow at this place.

395. *St. Bees and Charlotte Smith.* [xi.]

St. Bees’ Heads, anciently called the Cliff of Baruth, are a conspicuous sea-mark for all vessels sailing in the N.E. parts of the Irish Sea. In a bay, one side of which is formed by the southern headland, stands the village of St. Bees ; a place distinguished, from very early times, for its religious and scholastic foundations.

‘ St. Bees,’ say Nicholson and Burns, ‘ had its name from Bega, an holy woman from Ireland, who is said to have founded here, about the year of our Lord 650, a small monastery, where afterwards a church was built in memory of her.

‘ The aforesaid religious house, being destroyed by the Danes, was restored by William de Meschiens, son of Ranulph, and brother of Ranulph de Meschiens, first Earl of Cumberland after the Conquest ; and made a cell of a prior and six Benedictine monks to the Abbey of St. Mary at York.’

Several traditions of miracles, connected with the foundation of the first of these religious houses, survive among the people of the neighbourhood ; one of which is alluded to in these Stanzas ; and another, of a somewhat bolder and more peculiar character, has furnished the subject of a spirited poem by the Rev. R. Parkinson, M.A., late Divinity Lecturer of St. Bees’ College, and now Fellow of the Collegiate Church of Manchester.

After the dissolution of the monasteries, Archbishop Grindal founded a free school at St. Bees, from which the counties of

Cumberland and Westmoreland have derived great benefit ; and recently, under the patronage of the Earl of Lonsdale, a college has been established there for the education of ministers for the English Church. The old Conventional Church has been repaired under the superintendence of the Rev. Dr. Ainger, the Head of the College ; and is well worthy of being visited by any strangers who might be led to the neighbourhood of this celebrated spot.

The form of stanza in this Poem, and something in the style of versification, are adopted from the ‘*St. Monica*,’ a poem of much beauty upon a monastic subject, by Charlotte Smith : a lady to whom English verse is under greater obligations than are likely to be either acknowledged or remembered. She wrote little, and that little unambitiously, but with true feeling for rural Nature, at a time when Nature was not much regarded by English Poets ; for in point of time her earlier writings preceded, I believe, those of Cowper and Burns.

396. *Requiems.*

‘Are not, in sooth, their Requiems sacred ties?’ (xi. l. 73.)

I am aware that I am here treading upon tender ground ; but to the intelligent reader I feel that no apology is due. The prayers of survivors, during passionate grief for the recent loss of relatives and friends, as the object of those prayers could no longer be the suffering body of the dying, would naturally be ejaculated for the souls of the departed ; the barriers between the two worlds dissolving before the power of love and faith. The ministers of religion, from their habitual attendance upon sick-beds, would be daily witnesses of these benign results ; and hence would be strongly tempted to aim at giving to them permanence, by embodying them in rites and ceremonies, recurring at stated periods. All this, as it was in course of nature, so was it blameless, and even praiseworthy ; since some of its effects, in that rude state of society, could not but be salutary. No reflecting person, however, can view without sorrow the abuses which rose out of thus formalising sublime instincts and disinterested movements of passion, and perverting them into means of gratifying the ambition and rapacity of the priesthood. But, while we deplore and are indignant at these abuses, it would be a great mistake if we imputed the origin of the offices

to prospective selfishness on the part of the monks and clergy; *they* were at first sincere in their sympathy, and in their degree dupes rather of their own creed than artful and designing men. Charity is, upon the whole, the safest guide that we can take in judging our fellow-men, whether of past ages or of the present time.

397. *Sir William Hillary.*

'And they are led by noble Hillary' (xv. l. 14).

The TOWER OF REFUGE, an ornament to Douglas Bay, was erected chiefly through the humanity and zeal of Sir William Hillary; and he also was the founder of the lifeboat establishment at that place; by which, under his superintendence, and often by his exertions at the imminent hazard of his own life, many seamen and passengers have been saved.

398. *Isle of Man.* [xvi. l. 14.]

The sea-water on the coast of the Isle of Man is singularly pure and beautiful.

399. * *Isle of Man.* [xvii.]

My son William is here the person alluded to as saving the life of the youth; and the circumstances were as mentioned in the Sonnet.

400. * *By a retired Mariner.* [xix.]

Mary's brother Henry.

401. * *At Bala Sala.* [xx.]

A thankful refuge. Supposed to be written by a friend (Mr. Cookson) who died there a few years after.

402. * *Tynwald Hill.*

Mr. Robinson and I walked the greater part of the way from Castle-Town to Peel, and stopped some time at Tynwald Hill. My companions were an elderly man, who in a muddy way (for he was tipsy) explained and answered as far as he could my enquiries about the place and the ceremonies held here. I found more agreeable company in some little children, one of whom, upon my request, recited the Lord's Prayer to me, and I helped her to a clearer understanding of it as well as I could; but I was not at all satisfied with my own part. Hers was

much better done ; and I am persuaded that, like other children, she knew more about it than she was able to express, especially to a stranger.

403. *Snafell.*

‘Off with yon cloud, old Snafell’ (Sonnet xxi. l. 9).

The summit of this mountain is well chosen by Cowley as the scene of the ‘Vision,’ in which the spectral angel discourses with him concerning the government of Oliver Cromwell. ‘I found myself,’ says he, ‘on the top of that famous hill in the Island Mona, which has the prospect of three great, and not long since most happy, kingdoms. As soon as ever I looked upon them, they called forth the sad representation of all the sins and all the miseries that had overwhelmed them these twenty years.’ It is not to be denied that the changes now in progress, and the passions, and the way in which they work, strikingly resemble those which led to the disasters the philosophic writer so feelingly bewails. God grant that the resemblance may not become still more striking as months and years advance !

404. *Eagle in Mosaic.* [Sonnet xxv.]

‘On revisiting Dunolly Castle.’

This ingenious piece of workmanship, as I afterwards learned, had been executed for their own amusement by some labourers employed about the place.

405. * *In the Frith of Clyde.—Ailsa Crag during an eclipse of the sun, July 17, 1833.* [xxiii.]

The morning of the eclipse was exquisitely beautiful while we passed the Crag, as described in the sonnet. On the deck of the steamboat were several persons of the poor and labouring class ; and I could not but be struck with their cheerful talk with each other, while not one of them seemed to notice the magnificent objects with which we were surrounded ; and even the phenomenon of the eclipse attracted but little of their attention. Was it right not to regret this ? They appeared to me, however, so much alive in their own minds to their own concerns that I could not but look upon it as a misfortune that they had little perception for such pleasures as cannot be cultivated without ease and leisure. Yet, if one surveys life in all

its duties and relations, such ease and leisure will not be found so enviable a privilege as it may at first appear. Natural philosophy, painting, and poetry, and refined taste, are no doubt great acquisitions to society; but among those who dedicate themselves to such pursuits it is to be feared that few are as happy and as consistent in the management of their lives as the class of persons who at that time led me into this course of reflection. I do not mean by this to be understood to derogate from intellectual pursuits, for that would be monstrous. I say it in deep gratitude for this compensation to those whose cares are limited to the necessities of daily life. Among them, self-tormentors, so numerous in the higher classes of society, are rare.

406. * *On the Frith of Clyde.—In a Steamboat.* [xxiv.]

The mountain outline on the north of this island [Arran], as seen from the Frith of Clyde, is much the finest I have ever noticed in Scotland or elsewhere.

407. ‘*There, said a Stripling.*’ [xxxvii.]

Mosgiel was thus pointed out to me by a young man, on the top of the coach on my way from Glasgow to Kilmarnock. It is remarkable, that though Burns lived some time here, and during much the most productive period of his poetical life, he nowhere adverts to the splendid prospects stretching towards the sea, and bounded by the peaks of Arran on one part, which in clear weather he must have had daily before his eyes. Yet this is easily explained. In one of his poetical effusions he speaks of describing ‘fair Nature’s face,’ as a privilege on which he sets a high value; nevertheless, natural appearances rarely take a lead in his poetry. It is as a human being, eminently sensitive and intelligent, and not as a poet clad in his priestly robes and carrying the ensigns of sacerdotal office, that he interests and affects us.

Whether he speaks of rivers, hills, and woods, it is not so much on account of the properties with which they are absolutely endowed, as relatively to local patriotic remembrances and associations, or as they are ministerial to personal feelings, especially those of love, whether happy or otherwise; yet it is not *always* so. Soon after we had passed Mosgiel Farm we

crossed the Ayr, murmuring and winding through a narrow woody hollow. His line,

‘Auld hermit Ayr staw thro’ his woods,’ [=stole]

came at once to my mind, with Irwin, Lugar, Ayr, and Doon, Ayrshire streams over which he breathes a sigh, as being unnamed in song; and, surely, his own attempts to make them known were as successful as his heart could desire.

408. * *Written on a Blank Leaf of Macpherson’s ‘Ossian.’*
[xxvii.]

This poem should, for variety’s sake, take its place among the itinerary Sonnets on one of the Scotch Tours.

409. *Cave of Staffa.* [xxix.]

The reader may be tempted to exclaim, ‘How came this and the two following Sonnets to be written, after the dissatisfaction expressed in the preceding one?’ In fact, at the risk of incurring the reasonable displeasure of the master of the steam-boat, I returned to the cave, and explored it under circumstances more favourable to those imaginative impressions which it is so wonderfully fitted to make upon the mind.

410. *Ox-eyed Daisy.*

‘Hope smiled when your nativity was cast,
Children of summer!’ (xxxI. ll. 1-2.)

Upon the head of the columns which form the front of the cave, rests a body of decomposed basaltic matter, which was richly decorated with that large bright flower, the ox-eyed daisy. I had noticed the same flower growing with profusion among the bold rocks on the western coast of the Isle of Man; making a brilliant contrast with their black and gloomy surfaces.

411. *Iona.* [xxxIII.]

The four last lines of this Sonnet are adapted from a well-known Sonnet of Russel, as conveying my feeling better than any words of my own could do.

412. *River Eden.* [xxxviii.]

‘Yet fetched from Paradise.’

It is to be feared that there is more of the poet than the sound etymologist in this derivation of the name Eden. On the western coast of Cumberland is a rivulet which enters the sea at Moresby, known also in the neighbourhood by the name of Eden. May not the latter syllable come from the word Dean, *a valley?* Langdale, near Ambleside, is by the inhabitants called Langden. The former syllable occurs in the name Emont, a principal feeder of the Eden; and the stream which flows, when the tide is out, over Cartmel Sands, is called the Ea—*eau*, French—*aqua*, Latin.

413. *Ibid.*

‘Nature gives thee flowers that have no rival amidst British bowers.’

This can scarcely be true to the letter; but without stretching the point at all, I can say that the soil and air appear more congenial with many upon the bank of this river than I have observed in any other parts of Great Britain.

414. * *Monument of Mrs. Howard.* [xxxix.]

Before this monument was put up in the chapel at Wetheral, I saw it in the sculptor’s studio. Nollekens, who, by the bye, was a strange and grotesque figure that interfered much with one’s admiration of his works, showed me at the same time the various models in clay which he had made one after another of the mother and her infant. The improvement on each was surprising, and how so much grace, beauty, and tenderness had come out of such a head I was sadly puzzled to conceive. Upon a window-seat in his parlour lay two casts of faces; one of the Duchess of Devonshire, so noted in her day, and the other of Mr. Pitt, taken after his death—a ghastly resemblance, as these things always are, even when taken from the living subject, and more ghastly in this instance (of Mr. Pitt) from the peculiarity of the features. The heedless and apparently neglectful manner in which the faces of these two persons were left—the one so distinguished in London society, and the other upon whose counsels and public conduct during a most momentous period depended the fate of this great empire, and, perhaps, of

all Europe—afforded a lesson to which the dullest of casual visitors could scarcely be insensible. It touched me the more because I had so often seen Mr. Pitt upon his own ground at Cambridge and upon the floor of the House of Commons.

415. *Nunnery.* [XL_I.]

I became acquainted with the walks of Nunnery when a boy. They are within easy reach of a day's pleasant excursion from the town of Penrith, where I used to pass my summer holidays under the roof of my maternal grandfather. The place is well worth visiting, tho' within these few years its privacy, and therefore the pleasure which the scene is so well fitted to give, has been injuriously affected by walks cut in the rocks on that side the stream which had been left in its natural state.

416. *Scene at Corby.* [XL_{II}.]

'Canal, and Viaduct, and Railway tell !'

At Corby, a few miles below Nunnery, the Eden is crossed by a magnificent viaduct ; and another of these works is thrown over a deep glen or ravine at a very short distance from the main stream.

417. * *Druidical Monument.* [XL_{III}.]

'A weight of awe not easy to be borne.'

The daughters of Long Meg, placed in a perfect circle eighty yards in diameter, are seventy-two in number above ground ; a little way out of the circle stands Long Meg herself, a single stone, eighteen feet high. When I first saw this monument, as I came upon it by surprise, I might over-rate its importance as an object ; but, though it will not bear a comparison with Stonehenge, I must say, I have not seen any other relique of those dark ages, which can pretend to rival it in singularity and dignity of appearance.

418. * *Lowther.* [XL_{IV}.]

'Cathedral pomp.'

It may be questioned whether this union was in the contemplation of the Artist when he planned the edifice. However this might be, a Poet may be excused for taking the view of the subject presented in this Sonnet.

419. *To the Earl of Lonsdale.* [xlv.]

This sonnet was written immediately after certain trials, which took place at the Cumberland Assizes, when the Earl of Lonsdale, in consequence of repeated and long-continued attacks upon his character, through the local press, had thought it right to prosecute the conductors and proprietors of three several journals. A verdict of libel was given in one case; and, in the others, the prosecutions were withdrawn, upon the individuals retracting and disavowing the charges, expressing regret that they had been made, and promising to abstain from the like in future.

420. * *The Somnambulist.* [xlvi.]

This poem might be dedicated to my friend Sir G. Beaumont and Mr. Rogers jointly. While we were making an excursion together in this part of the Lake District, we heard that Mr. Glover the artist, while lodging at Lyulph's Tower, had been disturbed by a loud shriek, and upon rising he learnt that it had come from a young woman in the house who was in the habit of walking in her sleep. In that state she had gone down stairs, and while attempting to open the outer door, either from some difficulty, or the effect of the cold stone upon her feet, had uttered the cry which alarmed him. It seemed to us all that this might serve as a hint for a poem, and the story here told was constructed, and soon after put into verse by me as it now stands.

[Foot-note.—‘Lyulph’s Tower’—A pleasure-house built by the late Duke of Norfolk upon the banks of Ullswater. Force is the word used in the Lake District for Waterfall.]

XVIII. POEMS OF SENTIMENT AND REFLECTION.

421. *Expostulation and Reply.* [i.]

This poem is a favourite among the Quakers, as I have learnt on many occasions. It was composed in front of the house at Alfoxden, in the spring of 1798.

422. *The Tables turned.* [ii.]

Composed at the same time [as Expostulation and Reply].

423. * *Lines written in early Spring.* [III.]

1798. Actually composed while I was sitting by the side of the brook that runs down from the *Comb*, in which stands the village of Alford, through the grounds of Alfoxden. It was a chosen resort of mine. The brook fell down a sloping rock, so as to make a waterfall, considerable for that country ; and, across the pool below, had fallen a tree, an ash, if I rightly remember, from which rose, perpendicularly, boughs in search of the light intercepted by the deep shade above. The boughs bore leaves of green, that for want of sunshine had faded into almost lily-white ; and from the underside of this natural sylvan bridge depended long and beautiful tresses of ivy, which waved gently in the breeze, that might, poetically speaking, be called the breath of the waterfall. This motion varied, of course, in proportion to the power of water in the brook. When, with dear friends, I revisited this spot, after an interval of more than forty years, this interesting feature of the scene was gone. To the owner of the place I could not but regret that the beauty of this retired part of the grounds had not tempted him to make it more accessible, by a path, not broad or obtrusive, but sufficient for persons who love such scenes to creep along without difficulty.

424. * *A Character.*

The principal features are taken from that of my friend Robert Jones.

425. * *To my Sister.* [v.]

Composed in front of Alfoxden House.

My little boy-messenger on this occasion was the son of Basil Montagu. The larch mentioned in the first stanza was standing when I revisited the place in May, 1841, more than forty years after. I was disappointed that it had not improved in appearance, as to size, nor had it acquired anything of the majesty of age, which, even though less perhaps than any other tree, the larch sometimes does. A few score yards from this tree grew, when we inhabited Alfoxden, one of the most remarkable beech-trees ever seen. The ground sloped both towards and from it. It was of immense size, and threw out arms that struck into the soil like those of the banyan-tree, and rose again

from it. Two of the branches thus inserted themselves twice, which gave to each the appearance of a serpent moving along by gathering itself up in folds. One of the large boughs of this tree had been torn off by the wind before we left Alfoxden, but five remained. In 1841 we could barely find the spot where the tree had stood. So remarkable a production of nature could not have been wilfully destroyed.

426. * *Simon Lee, the old Huntsman.* [vi.]

This old man had been huntsman to the Squires of Alfoxden, which, at the time we occupied it, belonged to a minor. The old man's cottage stood upon the Common, a little way from the entrance to Alfoxden Park. But [in 1841] it had disappeared. Many other changes had taken place in the adjoining village, which I could not but notice with a regret more natural than well-considered. Improvements but rarely appear such to those who after long intervals of time revisit places they have had much pleasure in. It is unnecessary to add, the fact was as mentioned in the poem ; and I have, after an interval of forty-five years, the image of the old man as fresh before my eyes as if I had seen him yesterday. The expression when the hounds were out, 'I dearly love their voice,' was word for word from his own lips.

427. * *Lines written in Germany, 1798-9.* [vii.]

'A plague,' &c.

A bitter winter it was when these verses were composed by the side of my sister, in our lodgings, at a draper's house, in the romantic imperial town of Goslar, on the edge of the Hartz Forest. In this town the German Emperors of the Franconian line were accustomed to keep their court, and it retains vestiges of ancient splendour. So severe was the cold of this winter, that when we passed out of the parlour warmed by the stove, our cheeks were struck by the air as by cold iron. I slept in a room over a passage that was not ceiled. The people of the house used to say rather unfeelingly, that they expected I should be frozen to death some night ; but with the protection of a pelisse lined with fur, and a dog's-skin bonnet, such as was worn by the peasants, I walked daily on the ramparts, or on a sort of public ground or garden, in which was a pond. Here I had no companion but a kingfisher, a beautiful creature that

used to glance by me. I consequently became much attached to it. During these walks I composed the poem that follows, ‘The Poet’s Epitaph.’

Foot-note.—The Reader must be apprised, that the Stoves in North Germany generally have the impression of a gallopping horse upon them, this being part of the Brunswick Arms.

428. * *To the Daisy.* [ix.]

This and the other poems addressed to the same flower were composed at Town-End, Grasmere, during the earlier part of our residence there. I have been censured for the last line but one, ‘thy function apostolical,’ as being little less than profane. How could it be thought so? The word is adopted with reference to its derivation, implying something sent on a mission; and assuredly, this little flower, especially when the subject of verse, may be regarded, in its humble degree, as administering both to moral and to spiritual purposes.

429. *Matthew.* [x.]

In the school [of Hawkshead] is a tablet, on which are inscribed, in gilt letters, the names of the several persons who have been schoolmasters there since the foundation of the school, with the time at which they entered upon and quitted their office. Opposite to one of those names the Author wrote the following lines: ‘If Nature,’ &c.

430. * *Matthew.* [x.]

Such a tablet as is here spoken of continued to be preserved in Hawkshead school, though the inscriptions were not brought down to our time. This and other poems connected with Matthew would not gain by a literal detail of facts. Like the wanderer in the ‘Excursion,’ this schoolmaster was made up of several, both of his class and men of other occupations. I do not ask pardon for what there is of untruth in such verses, considered strictly as matters of fact. It is enough if, being true and consistent in spirit, they move and teach in a manner not unworthy of a Poet’s calling.

431. * *Personal Talk.* [xiii.]

Written at Town-End. The last line but two stood at first, better and more characteristically, thus :

‘By my half-kitchen and half-parlour fire.’

My sister and I were in the habit of having the tea-kettle in our little sitting-room ; and we toasted the bread ourselves, which reminds me of a little circumstance not unworthy of being set down among these minutiae. Happening both of us to be engaged a few minutes one morning, when we had a young prig of a Scotch lawyer to breakfast with us, my dear sister, with her usual simplicity, put the toasting-fork with a slice of bread into the hands of this Edinburgh genius. Our little book-case stood on one side of the fire. To prevent loss of time, he took down a book, and fell to reading, to the neglect of the toast, which was burnt to a cinder. Many a time have we laughed at this circumstance and other cottage simplicities of that day. By the bye, I have a spite at one of this series of sonnets (I will leave the reader to discover which), as having been the means of nearly putting off for ever our acquaintance with dear Miss Fenwick, who has always stigmatised one line of it as vulgar, and worthy only of having been composed by a country squire.

432. * *To the Spade of a Friend,* 1804. [xiv.]

This person was Thomas Wilkinson, a Quaker by religious profession ; by natural constitution of mind—or, shall I venture to say, by God’s grace ? he was something better. He had inherited a small estate, and built a house upon it, near Yanwath, upon the banks of the Emont. I have heard him say that his heart used to beat, in his boyhood, when he heard the sound of a drum and fife. Nevertheless, the spirit of enterprise in him confined itself in tilling his ground, and conquering such obstacles as stood in the way of its fertility. Persons of his religious persuasion do now, in a far greater degree than formerly, attach themselves to trade and commerce. He kept the old track. As represented in this poem, he employed his leisure hours in shaping pleasant walks by the side of his beloved river, where he also built something between a hermitage and a summer-house, attaching to it inscriptions, after the manner of Shenstone at his

Leasowes. He used to travel from time to time, partly from love of Nature, and partly with religious friends, in the service of humanity. His admiration of genius in every department did him much honour. Through his connection with the family in which Edmund Burke was educated, he became acquainted with that great man, who used to receive him with great kindness and condescension ; and many times have I heard Wilkinson speak of those interesting interviews. He was honoured also by the friendship of Elizabeth Smith, and of Thomas Clarkson and his excellent wife, and was much esteemed by Lord and Lady Lonsdale, and every member of that family. Among his verses (he wrote many), are some worthy of preservation ; one little poem in particular, upon disturbing, by prying curiosity, a bird while hatching her young in his garden. The latter part of this innocent and good man's life was melancholy. He became blind, and also poor, by becoming surety for some of his relations. He was a bachelor. He bore, as I have often witnessed, his calamities with unfailing resignation. I will only add, that while working in one of his fields, he unearthed a stone of considerable size, then another, and then two more ; and observing that they had been placed in order, as if forming the segment of a circle, he proceeded carefully to uncover the soil, and brought into view a beautiful Druid's temple, of perfect, though small dimensions. In order to make his farm more compact, he exchanged this field for another, and, I am sorry to add, the new proprietor destroyed this interesting relic of remote ages for some vulgar purpose. The fact, so far as concerns Thomas Wilkinson, is mentioned in the note on a sonnet on 'Long Meg and her Daughters.'

433. * *A Night Thought.* [xv.]

These verses were thrown off extempore upon leaving Mr. Luff's house at Fox Ghyll one evening. The good woman is not disposed to look at the bright side of things, and there happened to be present certain ladies who had reached the point of life where *youth* is ended, and who seemed to contend with each other in expressing their dislike of the country and the climate. One of them had been heard to say she could not endure a country where there was 'neither sunshine nor cavaliers.' [In pencil on opposite page—Gossip.]

434. * *An Incident characteristic of a favourite Dog.* [xvi.]

This dog I knew well. It belonged to Mrs. Wordsworth's brother, Mr. Thomas Hutchinson, who then lived at Sockburn-on-the-Tees, a beautiful retired situation, where I used to visit him and his sisters before my marriage. My sister and I spent many months there after my return from Germany in 1799.

435. *Tribute to the Memory of the same Dog.* [xvii.]

Was written at the same time, 1805. The dog Music died, aged and blind, by falling into a draw-well at Gallow Hill, to the great grief of the family of the Hutchinsons, who, as has been before mentioned, had removed to that place from Sockburn.

436. *Fidelity.* [xviii.]

The young man whose death gave occasion to this poem was named Charles Gough, and had come early in the Spring to Patterdale for the sake of angling. While attempting to cross over Helvellyn to Grasmere he slipped from a steep part of the rock where the ice was not thawed, and perished. His body was discovered as described in this poem. Walter Scott heard of the accident, and both he and I, without either of us knowing that the other had taken up the subject, each wrote a poem in admiration of the dog's fidelity. His contains a most beautiful stanza :

‘ How long didst thou think that his silence was slumber!
When the wind waved his garment how oft didst thou start ! ’

I will add that the sentiment in the last four lines of the last stanza of my verses was uttered by a shepherd with such exactness, that a traveller, who afterwards reported his account in print, was induced to question the man whether he had read them, which he had not.

437. * *Ode to Duty.* [xix.]

This Ode, written in 1805, is on the model of Gray's ‘Ode to Adversity,’ which is copied from Horace’s ‘Ode to Fortune.’

Many and many a time have I been twitted by my wife and sister for having forgotten this dedication of myself to the stern

law-giver. Transgressor indeed I have been, from hour to hour, from day to day ; I would fain hope however not more flagrantly or in a worse way than most of my tuneful brethren. But these last words are in a wrong strain. We should be rigorous to ourselves, and forbearing, if not indulgent, to others, and if we make comparisons at all it ought to be with those who have morally excelled us. [In pencil—But is not the first stanza of Gray's from a chorus of Aeschylus ? And is not Horace's Ode also modelled on the Greek ?]

438. * *Character of the Happy Warrior.* [xx.]

The course of the great war with the French naturally fixed one's attention upon the military character ; and, to the honour of our country, there are many illustrious instances of the qualities that constitute its highest excellence. Lord Nelson carried most of the virtues that the trials he was exposed to in his department of the service necessarily call forth and sustain, if they do not produce the contrary vices. But his public life was stained with one great crime, so that, though many passages of these lines were suggested by what was generally known as excellent in his conduct, I have not been able to connect his name with the poem as I could wish, or even to think of him with satisfaction in reference to the idea of what a warrior ought to be. For the sake of such of my friends as may happen to read this note I will add, that many elements of the character here portrayed were found in my brother John, who perished by shipwreck, as mentioned elsewhere. His messmates used to call him 'the Philosopher ;' from which it must be inferred that the qualities and dispositions I allude to had not escaped their notice. He often expressed his regret, after the war had continued some time, that he had not chosen the Naval instead of the East India Company's Service, to which his family connection had led him. He greatly valued moral and religious instruction for youth, as tending to make good sailors. The best, he used to say, came from Scotland ; the next to them from the north of England, especially from Westmoreland and Cumberland, where, thanks to the piety and local attachments of our ancestors, endowed, or, as they are called, free-schools abound.

439. * *The Force of Prayer.* [xxi.]

An appendage to ‘The White Doe.’ My friend, Mr. Rogers, has also written on the subject. The story is preserved in Dr. Whitaker’s *History of Craven*, a topographical writer of first-rate merit in all that concerns the past; but such was his aversion from the modern spirit, as shown in the spread of manufactories in those districts of which he treated, that his readers are left entirely ignorant, both of the progress of these arts, and their real bearing upon the comfort, virtues, and happiness of the inhabitants.

While wandering on foot through the fertile valleys, and over the moorlands of the Apennine that divides Yorkshire from Lancashire, I used to be delighted with observing the number of substantial cottages that had sprung up on every side, each having its little plot of fertile ground, won from the surrounding waste. A bright and warm fire, if needed, was always to be found in these dwellings. The father was at his loom, the children looked healthy and happy. Is it not to be feared that the increase of mechanic power has done away with many of these blessings, and substituted many evils? Alas, if these evils grow, how are they to be checked, and where is the remedy to be found? Political economy will not supply it, that is certain. We must look to something deeper, purer, and higher.

440. * *A Fact and an Imagination.* [xxii.]

The first and last four lines of this poem each make a sonnet, and were composed as such. But I thought that by intermediate lines they might be connected so as to make a whole. One or two expressions are taken from Milton’s *History of England*.

441. * *A little Onward.* [xxiii.]

The complaint in my eyes which gave occasion to this address to my daughter first showed itself as a consequence of inflammation, caught at the top of Kirkstone, when I was overheated by having carried up the ascent my eldest son, a lusty infant. Frequently has the disease recurred since, leaving the eyes in a state which has often prevented my reading for months, and makes me at this day incapable of bearing without injury

any strong light by day or night. My acquaintance with books has therefore been far short of my wishes, and on this account, to acknowledge the services daily and hourly done me by my family and friends, this note is written.

442. *Ode to Lycoris.* [xxiv.]

This, as well as the preceding and the two that follow, were composed in front of Rydal Mount, and during my walks in the neighbourhood. Nine-tenths of my verses have been murmured out in the open air. And here let me repeat what I believe has already appeared in print. One day a stranger, having walked round the garden and grounds of Rydal Mount, asked of one of the female servants, who happened to be at the door, permission to see her master's Study. 'This,' said she, leading him forward, 'is my master's library, where he keeps his books; but his study is out of doors.' After a long absence from home, it has more than once happened that some one of my cottage neighbours (not of the double-coach-house cottages) has said, 'Well, there he is; we are glad to hear him *boooing* about again.' Once more, in excuse for so much egotism, let me say these notes are written for my familiar friends, and at their earnest request. Another time a gentleman, whom James had conducted through the grounds, asked him what kind of plants thrrove best there. After a little consideration, he answered, 'Laurels.' 'That is,' said the stranger, 'as it should be. Don't you know that the laurel is the emblem of poetry, and that poets used, on public occasions, to be crowned with it?' James stared when the question was first put, but was doubtless much pleased with the information.

443. * *Ibid.*

The discerning reader who is aware that in the poem of 'Ellen Irwin' I was desirous of throwing the reader at once out of the old ballad, so as if possible to preclude a comparison between that mode of dealing with the subject and the mode I meant to adopt, may here, perhaps, perceive that this poem originated in the four last lines of the first stanza. These specks of snow reflected in the lake, and so transferred, as it were, to the subaqueous sky, reminded me of the swans which the fancy of the ancient classic poets yoked to the car of Venus. Hence the

tenor of the whole first stanza and the name of Lycoris, which with some readers, who think mythology and classical allusion too far-fetched, and therefore more or less unnatural or affected, will tend to unrealise the sentiment that pervades these verses. But surely one who has written so much in verse as I have done may be allowed to retrace his steps into the regions of fancy which delighted him in his boyhood, when he first became acquainted with the Greek and Roman Poets. Before I read Virgil I was so strongly attached to Ovid, whose *Metamorphoses* I read at school, that I was quite in a passion whenever I found him, in books of criticism, placed below Virgil. As to Homer, I was never weary of travelling over the scenes through which he led me. Classical literature affected me by its own beauty. But the truths of Scripture having been entrusted to the dead languages, and these fountains having been recently laid open at the Reformation, an importance and a sanctity were at that period attached to classical literature that extended, as is obvious in Milton's *Lycidas*, for example, both to its spirit and form in a degree that can never be revived. No doubt the hackneyed and lifeless use into which mythology fell towards the close of the 17th century, and which continued through the 18th, disgusted the general reader with all allusion to it in modern verse. And though, in deference to this disgust, and also in a measure participating in it, I abstained in my earlier writings from all introduction of pagan fable,—surely, even in its humble form, it may ally itself with real sentiment—as I can truly affirm it did in the present case.

444. * *Memory.* [xxviii.]

The verses ‘Or strayed from hope and promise, self-betrayed,’ were, I am sorry to say, suggested from apprehensions of the fate of my friend H. C., the subject of the verses addressed to H. C. when six years old. The piece which follows, to ‘Memory,’ arose out of similar feelings.

445. * *This Lawn.* [xxix.]

This lawn is the sloping one approaching the kitchen-garden, and was made out of it. Hundreds of times have I here watched the dancing of shadows amid a press of sunshine, and other

beautiful appearances of light and shade, flowers and shrubs. What a contrast between this and the cabbages and onions and carrots that used to grow there on a piece of ugly-shaped unsightly ground! No reflection, however, either upon cabbages or onions. The latter, we know, were worshipped by the Egyptians; and he must have a poor eye for beauty who has not observed how much of it there is in the form and colour which cabbages and plants of this genus exhibit through the various stages of their growth and decay. A richer display of colour in vegetable nature can scarcely be conceived than Coleridge, my sister, and I saw in a bed of potatoe plants in blossom near a hut upon the moor between Inversneyd and Loch Katrine. These blossoms were of such extraordinary beauty and richness that no one could have passed them without notice. But the sense must be cultivated through the mind before we can perceive those inexhaustible treasures of Nature—for such they truly are—without the least necessary reference to the utility of her productions, or even to the laws whereupon, as we learn by research, they are dependent. Some are of opinion that the habit of analysing, decomposing, and anatomising, is inevitably unfavourable to the perception of beauty. People are led into this mistake by overlooking the fact that such processes being to a certain extent within the reach of a limited intellect, we are apt to ascribe to them that insensibility of which they are in truth the effect, and not the cause. Admiration and love, to which all knowledge truly vital must tend, are felt by men of real genius in proportion as their discoveries in Natural Philosophy are enlarged; and the beauty in form of a plant or an animal is not made less but more apparent as a whole by a more accurate insight into its constituent properties and powers. A *Savant*, who is not also a poet in soul and a religionist in heart, is a feeble and unhappy creature.

446. * *Humanity.* [xxx.]

These verses and the preceding ones, entitled ‘Liberty,’ were composed as one piece, which Mrs. W. complained of as unwieldy and ill-proportioned; and accordingly it was divided into two, on her judicious recommendation.

[Printed notes: ‘The rocking-stones alluded to in the be-

ginning of the following verses are supposed to have been used, by our British ancestors, both for judicial and religious purposes. Such stones are not uncommonly found, at this day, both in Great Britain and in Ireland.' On l. 32, 'Descending to the worm in charity :' 'I am indebted here to a passage in one of Mr. Digby's valuable works.]

447. * *Thought on the Seasons.* [xxxii.]

Written at Rydal Mount, 1829.

448. * *To ——, on the Birth of her first Child.* [xxxiii.]

Written at Moresby near Whitehaven, 1833, when I was on a visit to my son, then incumbent of that small living. While I am dictating these Notes to my friend Miss Fenwick, Jan. 24th, 1843, the child, upon whose birth these verses were written, is under my roof, and is of a disposition so promising that the wishes and prayers and prophecies which I then breathed forth in verse are, thro' God's mercy, likely to be realised. [In pencil—Jane ?]

449. * *The Warning: a Sequel to the Foregoing.* [xxxiv.]

These lines were composed during the fever spread through the nation by the Reform Bill. As the motives which led to this measure, and the good or evil which has attended or has risen from it, will be duly appreciated by future historians, there is no call for dwelling on the subject in this place. I will content myself with saying that the then condition of the people's mind is not, in these verses, exaggerated.

450. * *The Labourer's Noon-day Hymn.* [xxxv.]

Bishop Ken's Morning and Evening Hymns are, as they deserve to be, familiarly known. Many other hymns have also been written on the same subjects; but not being aware of any being designed for noon-day I was induced to compose these verses. Often we had occasion to observe cottage children carrying in their baskets dinner to their fathers engaged with their daily labours in the fields and woods. How gratifying would it be to me could I be assured that any portion of these

stanzas had been sung by such a domestic concert under such circumstances. A friend of mine has told me that she introduced this Hymn into a village-school which she superintended ; and the stanzas in succession furnished her with texts to comment upon in a way which without difficulty was made intelligible to the children, and in which they obviously took delight ; and they were taught to sing it to the tune of the old 100th Psalm.

451. * *Ode composed on May Morning.* [xxxvi.]

* *To May.* [xxxvii.]

These two Poems originated in these lines ‘How delicate, &c.’ My daughter and I left Rydal Mount upon a Tour through our mountains with Mr. and Mrs. Carr, in the month of May 1826 ; and as we were going up the Vale of Newlands I was struck with the appearance of the little chapel gleaming through the veil of half-opened leaves, and the feeling which was then conveyed to my mind was expressed in the stanza that follows. As in the case of ‘Liberty’ and ‘Humanity,’ mentioned before, my first intention was to write only one Poem ; but subsequently I broke it into two, making additions to each part, so as to produce a consistent and appropriate whole.

452. * *Lines suggested by a Portrait from the Pencil of F. Stone.* [xxxviii.]

* *The foregoing Subject resumed.* [xxxix.]

This Portrait has hung for many years in our principal sitting-room, and represents J. Q. as she was when a girl. The picture, though it is somewhat thinly painted, has much merit in tone and general effect. It is chiefly valuable, however, from the sentiment that pervades it. The anecdote of the saying of the monk in sight of Titian’s picture was told in this house by Mr. Wilkie, and was, I believe, first communicated to the public in this poem, the former portion of which I was composing at the time. Southey heard the story from Miss Hutchinson, and transferred it to the ‘Doctor ;’ but it is not easy to explain how my friend Mr. Rogers, in a note subsequently added to his ‘Italy,’ was led to speak of the same remarkable words having many years before been spoken in his hearing by a monk or

priest in front of a picture of the Last Supper placed over a refectory-table in a convent at Padua. [Printed note on xxxviii., last line : ‘The Escurial. The pile of buildings composing the palace and convent of San Lorenzo has, in common usage, lost its proper name in that of the Escurial, a village at the foot of the hill upon which the splendid edifice, built by Philip the Second, stands. It need scarcely be added, that Wilkie is the painter alluded to.’ On xxxix.:

‘Frail ties, dissolving or dissolved
On earth, will be revived, we trust, in heaven.’

‘In the class entitled “Musings,” in Mr. Southe’s Minor Poems, is one upon his own miniature picture, taken in childhood, and another upon a landscape painted by Gaspar Poussin. It is possible that every word of the above verses, though similar in subject, might have been written had the author been unacquainted with those beautiful effusions of poetic sentiment. But, for his own satisfaction, he must be allowed thus publicly to acknowledge the pleasure those two Poems of his friend have given him, and the grateful influence they have upon his mind as often as he reads them or thinks of them.’]

453. **Upon seeing a coloured Drawing of the Bird of Paradise in an Album.* [xli.]

I cannot forbear to record that the last seven lines of this poem were composed in bed, during the night of the day on which my sister S. H. died, about six p.m., and it was the thought of her innocent and beautiful life that through faith prompted the words :

‘On wings that fear no glance of God’s pure sight,
No tempest from His breath.’

The reader will find two Poems on pictures of this bird among my Poems. I will here observe, that in a far greater number of instances than have been mentioned in these Notes one Poem has, as in this case, grown out of another, either because I felt the subject had been inadequately treated or that the thoughts and images suggested in course of composition have been such as I found interfered with the unity indispensable to every work of art, however humble in character.

XIX. SONNETS DEDICATED TO LIBERTY AND ORDER.

454. *Change.* [iv. l. 14.]

‘Perilous is sweeping change, all chance un-sound.’

‘All change is perilous, and all chance unsound.’ SPENSER.

455. *American Repudiation.* [viii.]

‘Men of the Western World.’

These lines were written several years ago, when reports prevailed of cruelties committed in many parts of America, by men making a law of their own passions. A far more formidable, as being a more deliberate mischief, has appeared among those States, which have lately broken faith with the public creditor in a manner so infamous. I cannot, however, but look at both evils under a similar relation to inherent good, and hope that the time is not distant when our brethren of the West will wipe off this stain from their name and nation.

456. *To the Pennsylvanians.* [ix.]

Happily the language of expostulation in which this Sonnet is written is no longer applicable. It will be gratifying to Americans and Englishmen (*indignos fraternum rumpere foedus*) to read the following particulars communicated in a letter from Mr. Reed, dated October 28, 1850. ‘In Mr. Wordsworth’s letters to me you will have observed that a good deal is said on the Pennsylvania Loans, a subject in which, as you are aware, he was interested for his friends rather than for himself. Last December, when I learned that a new edition of his poems was in press, I wrote to him (it was my last letter) to say frankly that his Sonnet “To Pennsylvanians” *was no longer just*, and to desire him *not to let it stand so for after time*. It was very gratifying to me on receiving a copy of the new edition, which was not till after his death, to find the ‘*additional note*’ at the end of the fifth volume, showing by its being printed on the unusual place of a fly-leaf, that he had been anxious to attend to such a request. It was characteristic of that righteousness which distinguished him as an author; and it has this interest (as I conjecture) that it was probably the last sentence he com-

posed for the press. It is chiefly on this account that I mention it to you.*

457. * *Feel for the Wrongs, &c.* [xiv.]

This Sonnet is recommended to the perusal of the Anti-Corn-Law-Leaguers, the Political Economists, and of all those who consider that the evils under which we groan are to be removed or palliated by measures ungoverned by moral and religious principles.

458. *Sonnets upon the Punishment of Death.* [xx.]

Of these Sonnets the author thus wrote to John Peace, Esq., Bristol :

Rydal Mount, Feb. 23. 1842.

MY DEAR SIR,

I was truly pleased with the receipt of the letter which you were put upon writing by the perusal of my ‘Penal Sonnets’ in the *Quarterly Review*. Being much engaged at present, I might have deferred making my acknowledgments for this and other favours (particularly your ‘Descant’) if I had not had a special occasion for addressing you at this moment. A Bristol lady has kindly undertaken to be the bearer of the walking-stick which I spoke to you of some time since. It was cut from a holly-tree planted in our garden by my own hand.

Your ‘Descant’ amused me, but I must protest against your system, which would discard punctuation to the extent you propose. It would, I think, destroy the harmony of blank verse when skilfully written. What would become of the pauses at the third syllable followed by an *and*, or any such word, without the rest which a comma, when consistent with the sense, calls upon the reader to make, and which being made, he starts with the weak syllable that follows, as from the beginning of a verse? I am sure Milton would have supported me in this opinion. Thomson wrote his blank verse before his ear was formed as it was when he wrote the ‘Castle of Indolence,’ and some of his short rhyme poems. It was, there-

* *Memoirs*, ii. p. 114.

fore, rather hard in you to select him as an instance of punctuation abused. I am glad that you concur in my view on the *Punishment of Death*. An outcry, as I expected, has been raised against me by weak-minded humanitarians. What do you think of one person having opened a battery of nineteen fourteen-pounders upon me, *i.e.* nineteen sonnets, in which he gives himself credit for having blown me and my system to atoms? Another sonneteer has had a solitary shot at me from Ireland.

Ever faithfully yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.*

XX. MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

459. *Epistle to Sir G. H. Beaumont, Bart.* [I.]

From the South-west Coast of Cumberland,—1811. This poem opened, when first written, with a paragraph that has been transferred as an introduction to the first series of my ‘Scotch Memorials.’ The journey, of which the first part is here described, was from Grasmere to Bootle, on the south-west coast of Cumberland, the whole along mountain-roads, through a beautiful country, and we had fine weather. The verses end with our breakfast at the Head of Yewdale, in a yeoman’s house, which, like all the other property in that sequestered vale, has passed, or is passing, into the hands of Mr. James Marshall, of Monk Coniston, in Mr. Knott’s, the late owner’s time, called Waterhead. Our hostess married a Mr. Oldfield, a lieutenant in the navy; they lived together for some time at Hackett, where she still resides as his widow. It was in front of that house, on the mountain-side, near which stood the peasant who, while we were passing at a distance, saluted us, waving a kerchief in his hand, as described in the poem. The dog which we met soon after our starting, had belonged to Mr. Rowlandson, who for forty years was curate at Grasmere, in place of the rector, who lived to extreme old age, in a state of insanity. Of this Mr. R. much might be said, both with reference to his character, and the way in which he was regarded by his parishioners. He was a man of a robust frame, had a firm voice and authoritative manner, of

* *Memoirs*, ii. pp. 386-7.

strong natural talents, of which he was himself conscious, for he has been heard to say (it grieves me to add with an oath), ‘If I had been brought up at college by —— I should have been a Bishop.’ Two vices used to struggle in him for mastery, avarice and the love of strong drink. But avarice, as is common in like cases, always got the better of its opponent, for though he was often intoxicated it was never, I believe, at his own expense. As has been said of one in a more exalted station, he could take any *given* quantity. I have heard a story of him which is worth the telling. One Summer’s morning our Grasmere curate, after a night’s carouse in the Vale of Langdale, on his return home having reached a point near which the whole Vale of Grasmere might be seen with the Lake immediately below him, he stept aside and sat down upon the turf. After looking for some time at the landscape, then in the perfection of its morning beauty, he exclaimed, ‘Good God ! that I should have led so long such a life in such a place !’ This no doubt was deeply felt by him at the time, but I am not authorised to say that any noticeable amendment followed. Penuriousness strengthened upon him as his body grew feebler with age. He had purchased property and kept some land in his own hands, but he could not find in his heart to lay out the necessary hire for labourers at the proper season, and consequently he has often been seen in half dotage working his hay in the month of November by moon-light—a melancholy sight, which I myself have witnessed. Notwithstanding all that has been said, this man, on account of his talents and superior education, was looked up to by his parishioners, who, without a single exception, lived at that time (and most of them upon their own small inheritances) in a state of republican equality, a condition favourable to the growth of kindly feelings among them, and, in a striking degree, exclusive to temptations to gross vice and scandalous behaviour. As a pastor, their curate did little or nothing for them ; but what could more strikingly set forth the efficacy of the Church of England, through its Ordinances and Liturgy, than that, in spite of the unworthiness of the minister, his church was regularly attended ; and though there was not much appearance in his flock of what might be called animated piety, intoxication was rare, and dissolute morals unknown ? With the Bible they were, for the most part, well acquainted, and, as was strikingly shown when they

were under affliction, must have been supported and comforted by habitual belief in those truths which it is the aim of the Church to inculcate. [Foot-notes: ‘Sled’ (l. 110)—a local word for sledge; ‘bield’ (l. 175)—a word common in the country, signifying shelter, as in Scotland.]

460. * *Upon perusing the foregoing Epistle, thirty Years after its Composition.*

Loughrigg Tarn.

This beautiful pool, and the surrounding scene, are minutely described in my little book on the Lakes.

Sir G. H. B., in the earlier part of his life, was induced, by his love of Nature and the art of painting, to take up his abode at Old Brathay, about three miles from this spot, so that he must have seen it [the Tarn] under many aspects; and he was so much pleased with it, that he purchased the Tarn with a view to build such a residence as is alluded to in this ‘Epistle.’ Baronets and knights were not so common in that day as now, and Sir M. le Fleming, not liking to have a rival in this kind of distinction so near him, claimed a sort of lordship over the territory, and showed dispositions little in unison with those of Sir G. Beaumont, who was eminently a lover of peace. The project of building was given up, Sir G. B. retaining possession of the Tarn. Many years afterwards, a Kendal tradesman, born upon its banks, applied to me for the purchase of it, and, accordingly, it was sold for the sum that had been given for it, and the money was laid out, under my direction, upon a substantial oak fence for a certain number of yew-trees, to be planted in Grasmere Churchyard. Two were planted in each enclosure, with a view to remove, after a certain time, the one which throve the least. After several years, the stouter plant being left, the others were taken up, and placed in other parts of the same churchyard, and were adequately fenced at the expense and under the care of the late Mr. Barber, Mr. Greenwood, and myself. The whole eight are now thriving, and are an ornament to a place which, during late years, has lost much of its rustic simplicity by the introduction of iron palisades, to fence off family burying-grounds, and by numerous monuments, some of them in very bad taste, from which this place of burial was in my memory quite free: see the lines in the sixth book of ‘The Excursion,’ beginning,

‘Green is the Church-yard.’

The ‘Epistle,’ to which these notes refer, though written so far back as 1811, was carefully revised so late as 1842, previous to its publication. I am loath to add, that it was never seen by the person to whom it is addressed. So sensible am I of the deficiencies in all that I write, and so far does every thing that I attempt fall short of what I wish it to be, that even private publication, if such a term may be allowed, requires more resolution than I can command. I have written to give vent to my own mind, and not without hope that, some time or other, kindred minds might benefit by my labours; but I am inclined to believe I should never have ventured to send forth any verses of mine to the world, if it had not been done on the pressure of personal occasions. Had I been a rich man, my productions, like this ‘Epistle,’ the ‘Tragedy of the Borderers,’ &c., would most likely have been confined to ms.

461. *Ibid.*

Loughrigg Tarn, alluded to in the foregoing Epistle, resembles, though much smaller in compass, the Lake Nemi, or *Speculum Diana* as it is often called, not only in its clear waters and circular form, and the beauty immediately surrounding it, but also as being overlooked by the eminence of Langdale Pikes as Lake Nemi is by that of Monte Calvo. Since this Epistle was written Loughrigg Tarn has lost much of its beauty by the felling of many natural clumps of wood, relics of the old forest, particularly upon the farm called ‘The Oaks,’ from the abundance of that tree which grew there.

It is to be regretted, upon public grounds, that Sir George Beaumont did not carry into effect his intention of constructing here a Summer Retreat in the style I have described; as his taste would have set an example how buildings, with all the accommodations modern society requires, might be introduced even into the most secluded parts of this country without injuring their native character. The design was not abandoned from failure of inclination on his part, but in consequence of local untowardness which need not be particularised.

462.* *Gold and Silver Fishes in a Vase.* [II.]

They were a present from Miss Jewsbury, of whom mention is made in the Note at the end of the next poem. The fish were healthy to all appearance in their confinement for a long time, but at last, for some cause we could not make out, languished; and one of them being all but dead, they were taken to the pool under the old pollard oak. The apparently dying one lay on its side unable to move. I used to watch it, and about the tenth day it began to right itself, and in a few days more was able to swim about with its companions. For many months they continued to prosper in their new place of abode; but one night by an unusually great flood they were swept out of the pool and perished, to our great regret.

463.* *Liberty (Sequel to the above).* [III.]

The connection of this with the preceding poem is sufficiently obvious.

464. *Liberty.* [III.]

'Life's book for thee may be unclosed, till age
Shall with a thankful tear bedrop its latest page.'

There is now, alas! no possibility of the anticipation, with which the above Epistle concludes, being realised: nor were the verses ever seen by the Individual for whom they were intended. She accompanied her husband, the Rev. Wm. Fletcher, to India, and died of cholera, at the age of thirty-two or thirty-three years, on her way from Shalapore to Bombay, deeply lamented by all who knew her.

Her enthusiasm was ardent, her piety steadfast; and her great talents would have enabled her to be eminently useful in the difficult path of life to which she had been called. The opinion she entertained of her own performances, given to the world under her maiden name, Jewsbury, was modest and humble, and, indeed, far below their merits; as is often the case with those who are making trial of their powers, with a hope to discover what they are best fitted for. In one quality, viz., quickness in the motions of her mind, she had, within the range of the Author's acquaintance, no equal.

465. *Poor Robin.* [iv.]

The small wild Geranium known by that name.

466. * *Ibid.*

I often ask myself what will become of Rydal Mount after our day. Will the old walls and steps remain in front of the house and about the grounds, or will they be swept away with all the beautiful mosses and ferns and wild geraniums and other flowers which their rude construction suffered and encouraged to grow among them? This little wild flower, ‘Poor Robin,’ is here constantly courting my attention and exciting what may be called a domestic interest with the varying aspects of its stalks and leaves and flowers. Strangely do the tastes of men differ, according to their employment and habits of life. ‘What a nice well would that be,’ said a labouring man to me one day, ‘if all that rubbish was cleared off.’ The ‘rubbish’ was some of the most beautiful mosses and lichens and ferns and other wild growths, as could possibly be seen. Defend us from the tyranny of trimness and neatness, showing itself in this way! Chatterton says of Freedom, ‘Upon her head wild weeds were spread,’ and depend upon it, if ‘the marvellous boy’ had undertaken to give Flora a garland, he would have preferred what we are apt to call weeds to garden-flowers. True taste has an eye for both. Weeds have been called flowers out of place. I fear the place most people would assign to them is too limited. Let them come near to our abodes, as surely they may without impropriety or disorder.

467. * *To the Lady le Fleming.* [ix.]

After thanking in prose Lady Fleming for the service she had done to her neighbourhood by erecting this Chapel, I have nothing to say beyond the expression of regret that the architect did not furnish an elevation better suited to the site in a narrow mountain pass, and what is of more consequence, better constructed in the interior for the purposes of worship. It has no chancel. The Altar is unbecomingly confined. The Pews are so narrow as to preclude the possibility of kneeling. There is no vestry, and what ought to have been first mentioned, the Font, instead of standing at its proper place at the entrance, is thrust

into the farthest end of a little pew. When these defects shall be pointed out to the munificent patroness, they will, it is hoped, be corrected. [In pencil—Have they not been corrected in part at least? 1843.]

468. * *To a Redbreast (in Sickness).* [VI.]

Almost the only Verses composed by our lamented sister S. H. [=Miss Sarah Hutchinson, sister of Mrs. Wordsworth].

469. * *Floating Island.* [VII.]

My poor sister takes a pleasure in repeating these Verses, which she composed not long before the beginning of her sad illness.

470. * *Once I could hail, &c.* [VIII.]

‘No faculty yet given me to espy the dusky shape.’ Afterwards, when I could not avoid seeing it, I wondered at this, and the more so because, like most children, I had been in the habit of watching the moon thro’ all her changes, and had often continued to gaze at it while at the full, till half-blinded.

471. * *The Gleaner (suggested by a Picture).*

This poem was first printed in the Annual called ‘The Keepsake.’ The Painter’s name I am not sure of, but I think it was Holmes.

472. *Nightshade.* [IX. ii. 6.]

Bekangs Ghyll—or the dell of Nightshade—in which stands St. Mary’s Abbey in Low Furness.

473. *Churches—East and West.* [X.]

Our churches, invariably perhaps, stand east and west, but why is by few persons exactly known; nor that the degree of deviation from due east often noticeable in the ancient ones was determined, in each particular case, by the point on the horizon at which the sun rose upon the day of the saint to whom the church was dedicated. These observances of our ancestors, and the causes of them, are the subject of the following stanzas.

474. *The Horn of Egremont Castle.* [xi.]

This story is a Cumberland tradition. I have heard it also related of the Hall of Hutton John, an ancient residence of the Huddlestons, in a sequestered valley upon the river Dacor. [In the I. F. MSS. the Note runs thus: '1806. A tradition transferred from the ancient mansion of Hutton John, the seat of the Huddlestons, to Egremont Castle.]

475. * *Goody Blake and Harry Gill.* [xii.]

Written at Alfoxden, 1798. The incident from Dr. Darwin's *Zoonomia*.

476. * *To a Child: written in her Album.* [xiv.]

This quatrain was extempore on observing this image, as I had often done, on the lawn of Rydal Mount. It was first written down in the Album of my god-daughter, Rotha Quillinan.

477. * *Lines written in the Album of the Countess of Lonsdale.* [xv.]

This is a faithful picture of that amiable Lady as she then was. The youthfulness of figure and demeanour and habits, which she retained in almost unprecedented degree, departed a very few years after, and she died without violent disease by gradual decay, before she reached the period of old age. [In pencil—Was she not 70? Mr. J.]

478. *The Russian Fugitive.* [xvii.]

Peter Henry Bruce, having given in his entertaining Memoirs the substance of this Tale, affirms that, besides the concurring reports of others, he had the story from the lady's own mouth. The Lady Catherine, mentioned towards the close, is the famous Catherine, then bearing that name as the acknowledged wife of Peter the Great.

479. * *Ibid.*

Early in life this story had interested me; and I often thought it would make a pleasing subject for an Opera or musical drama.

XXI. INSCRIPTIONS.

480. * (I.) In the grounds of Coleorton these verses are engraved on a stone, placed near the tree, which was thriving and spreading when I saw it in the summer of 1841.

481. * (II.) This Niche is in the sandstone rock in the winter-garden at Coleorton, which garden, as has been elsewhere said, was made under our direction out of an old unsightly quarry. While the labourers were at work Mrs. Wordsworth, my sister, and I used to amuse ourselves occasionally in scooping this seat out of the soft stone. It is of the size, with something of the appearance, of a stall in a cathedral. This inscription is not engraven, as the former and the two following are, in the grounds.

482. * (VI.) The circumstance alluded to at the conclusion of these verses was told me by Dr. Satterthwaite, who was Incumbent of Boodle, a small town at the foot of Black Combe. He had the particulars from one of the engineers, who was employed in making trigonometrical surveys of that region.

483. * (VIII.) Engraven, during my absence in Italy, upon a brass plate inserted in the stone.

484. * (IX.) The walk is what we call the far-terrace, beyond the summer-house, at Rydal Mount. The lines were written when we were afraid of being obliged to quit the place to which we were so much attached.

485. * (XI.) The monument of ice here spoken of I observed while ascending the middle road of the three ways that lead from Rydal to Grasmere. It was on my right hand, and my eyes were upon it when it fell, as told in these lines.

486. * (XII.) Where the second quarry now is, as you pass from Rydal to Grasmere, there was formerly a length of smooth rock that sloped towards the road on the right hand. I used to call it tadpole slope, from having frequently observed there the

water bubbles gliding under the ice, exactly in the shape of that creature.

XXII. SELECTIONS FROM CHAUCER MODERNISED.

487. *Of the Volume in which the 'Selections' appeared.*

Of these 'Selections' the Author wrote as follows to Professor Reed, of Philadelphia :

'There has recently been published in London a volume of some of Chaucer's tales and poems modernised. This little specimen originated in what I attempted with the "Prioress's Tale ;" and if the book should find its way to America, you will see in it two further specimens from myself. I had no further connection with the publication than by making a present of these to one of the contributors. Let me, however, recommend to your notice the "Prologue" and the "Franklin's Tale ;" they are both by Mr. Horne, a gentleman unknown to me, but are, the latter in particular, very well done. Mr. Leigh Hunt has not failed in the "Manciple's Tale," which I myself modernised many years ago ; but, though I much admire the genius of Chaucer as displayed in this performance, I could not place my version at the disposal of the editor, as I deemed the subject somewhat too indelicate, for pure taste, to be offered to the world at this time of day. Mr. Horne has much hurt this publication by not abstaining from the "Reve's Tale ;" this, after making all allowance for the rude manners of Chaucer's age, is intolerable, and by indispensably softening down the incidents, he has killed the spirit of that humour, gross and farcical, that pervades the original. When the work was first mentioned to me, I protested as strongly as possible against admitting any coarseness or indelicacy ; so that my conscience is clear of countenancing aught of that kind. So great is my admiration of Chaucer's genius, and so profound my reverence for him as an instrument in the hands of Providence for spreading the light of literature through his native land, that, notwithstanding the defects and faults in this publication, I am glad of it, as a mean for making many acquainted with the original who would otherwise be ignorant of everything about him but his name.'*

* Extract: January 13th, 1841 (*Memoirs*, ii. p. 374-5).

488. *The Prioress's Tale.]*

'Call up him who left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold.'

In the following Poem no further deviation from the original has been made than was necessary for the fluent reading and instant understanding of the Author: so much, however, is the language altered since Chaucer's time, especially in pronunciation, that much was to be removed, and its place supplied with as little incongruity as possible. The ancient accent has been retained in a few conjunctions, as *alsd* and *alway*, from a conviction that such sprinklings of antiquity would be admitted, by persons of taste, to have a graceful accordance with the subject. The fierce bigotry of the Prioress forms a fine back-ground for her tender-hearted sympathies with the Mother and Child; and the mode in which the story is told amply atones for the extravagance of the miracle.

XXIII. POEMS REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF OLD AGE.

489. *The Old Cumberland Beggar.* [I.]

The class of Beggars to which the Old Man here described belongs will probably soon be extinct. It consisted of poor, and mostly old and infirm persons, who confined themselves to a stated round in their neighbourhood, and had certain fixed days, on which, at different houses, they regularly received alms, sometimes in money, but mostly in provisions.

490. * *Ibid.*

Observed, and with great benefit to my own heart, when I was a child. Written at Racedown and Alfoxden in my 23d year. The political economists were about that time beginning their war upon mendicity in all its forms, and by implication, if not directly, on alms-giving also. This heartless process has been carried as far as it can go by the AMENDED Poor Law Bill, tho' the inhumanity that prevails in this measure is somewhat disguised by the profession that one of its objects is to throw the poor upon the voluntary donations of their neighbours, that is, if rightly interpreted, to force them into a condition between re-

lief in the Union Poor House and alms robbed of their Christian grace and spirit, as being forced rather from the avaricious and selfish ; and all, in fact, but the humane and charitable are at liberty to keep all they possess from their distressed brethren.

491. *The Farmer of Tilsbury Vale.*

With this picture, which was taken from real life, compare the imaginative one of ‘The Reverie of Poor Susan,’ and see (to make up the deficiencies of the class) ‘The Excursion’ *passim*.

492. *Ibid.*

The character of this man was described to me, and the incident upon which the verses turn was told me by Mr. Pool, of Nether Stowey, with whom I became acquainted through our common friend S. T. C. During my residence at Alfoxden, I used to see a great deal of him, and had frequent occasions to admire the course of his daily life, especially his conduct to his labourers and poor neighbours. Their virtues he carefully encouraged, and weighed their faults in the scales of charity. If I seem in these verses to have treated the weaknesses of the farmer and his transgression too tenderly, it may in part be ascribed to my having received the story from one so averse to all harsh judgment. After his death was found in his *escriotoir* a lock of gray hair, carefully preserved, with a notice that it had been cut from the head of his faithful shepherd, who had served him for a length of years. I need scarcely add that he felt for all men as brothers. He was much beloved by distinguished persons :—Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Southey, Sir H. Davy, and many others, and in his own neighbourhood was highly valued as a magistrate, a man of business, and in every other social relation. The latter part of the poem, perhaps, requires some apology, as being too much of an echo to the ‘Reverie of Poor Susan.’

493. *The small Celandine.* [III.]

See ‘Poems of the Fancy’ [xi.].

494. * *The two Thieves.* [IV.]

This is described from the life, as I was in the habit of observing when a boy at Hawkshead School. Daniel was more

than 80 years older than myself when he was daily thus occupied under my notice. No book could have so early taught me to think of the changes to which human life is subject, and while looking at him I could not but say to myself, We may, any of us, I or the happiest of my playmates, live to become still more the object of pity than the old man, this half-doating pilferer.

495. * *Animal Tranquillity and Decay.* [v.]

If I recollect right, these verses were an overflow from the 'Old Cumberland Beggar.'

XXIV. EPITAPHS AND ELEGIAC PIECES.

496. * *From Chiabrera.* [i. to ix.]

Those from Chiabrera were chiefly translated when Mr. Coleridge was writing his *Friend*, in which periodical my Essay on Epitaphs, written about that time, was first published. For further notice of Chiabrera in connection with his Epitaphs see 'Musings at Aquapendente.'

497. * *By a blest Husband, &c.*

This lady was named Carleton. She, along with a sister, was brought up in the neighbourhood of Ambleside. The Epitaph, a part of it at least, is in the church at Bromsgrove, where she resided after her marriage.

498. *Cenotaph.*

In affectionate remembrance of Frances Fermor, whose remains are deposited in the Church of Claines, near Worcester, this stone is erected by her sister, Dame Margaret, wife of Sir George Beaumont, Bart., who, feeling not less than the love of a brother for the deceased, commends this memorial to the care of his heirs and successors in the possession of this place. (See the verses on Mrs. F.)

499. * *Epitaph in the Chapel-yard of Langdale, Westmoreland.*
[iv.]

Owen Lloyd, the subject of this Epitaph, was born at Old

Brathay, near Ambleside, and was the son of Charles Lloyd and his wife Sophia (née Pemberton), both of Birmingham. They had many children, both sons and daughters, of whom the most remarkable was the subject of this Epitaph. He was educated under Dawes of Ambleside, Dr. Butler of Shrewsbury, and lastly at Trin. Coll., Cambridge, where he would have been greatly distinguished as a scholar, but for inherited infirmities of bodily constitution, which from early childhood affected his mind. His love for the neighbourhood in which he was born and his sympathy with the habits and characters of the mountain yeomanry, in conjunction with irregular spirits, that unfitted him for facing duties in situations to which he was unaccustomed, inclined him to accept the retired curacy of Langdale. How much he was beloved and honoured there and with what feelings he discharged his duty under the oppressions of severe malady is set forth, though imperfectly, in this Epitaph.

500. * Address to the Scholars of the Village School.

Were composed at Goslar in Germany. They will be placed among the Elegiac pieces.

501. * Elegiac Stanzas suggested by a Picture of Peel Castle.

[vi.]

Sir George Beaumont painted two pictures of this subject, one of which he gave to Mrs. Wordsworth, saying she ought to have it: but Lady B. interfered, and after Sir George's death she gave it to Sir Uvedale Price, in whose house at Foxley I have seen it—rather grudgingly I own.

502. Elegiac Verses. [viii.]

In memory of my Brother, John Wordsworth, Commander of the E.I. Company's ship the Earl of Abergavenny, in which he perished by calamitous shipwreck, Feb. 6, 1805. Composed near the Mountain track that leads from Grasmere through Grisdale Hawes, where it descends towards Patterdale. 1805.

503. Moss Campion (*Silene acaulis*). [*Ibid.* II. l. 5.]

This most beautiful plant is scarce in England, though it is found in great abundance upon the mountains of Scotland. The

first specimen I ever saw of it, in its native bed, was singularly fine, the tuft or cushion being at least eight inches in diameter, and the root proportionably thick. I have only met with it in two places among our mountains, in both of which I have since sought for it in vain.

Botanists will not, I hope, take it ill, if I caution them against carrying off, inconsiderately, rare and beautiful plants. This has often been done, particularly from Ingleborough and other mountains in Yorkshire, till the species have totally disappeared, to the great regret of lovers of Nature living near the places where they grew.

504. *Lines.*

Composed at Grasmere, during a walk one evening after a stormy day, the Author having just read in a newspaper that the dissolution of Mr. Fox was hourly expected, ‘Loud is the Vale,’ &c. [ix.]

505. * *Invocation to the Earth.* [x.]

Composed immediately after the Thanksgiving Ode, to which it may be considered as a second part.

506. * *Elegiac Stanzas. Addressed to Sir G. H. B.* [xii.]

On Mrs. Fermor. This lady had been a widow long before I knew her. Her husband was of the family of the lady celebrated in the ‘Rape of the Lock,’ and was, I believe, a Roman Catholic. The sorrow which his death caused her was fearful in its character, as described in this Poem, but was subdued in course of time by the strength of her religious faith. I have been for many weeks at a time an inmate with her at Coleorton Hall, as were also Mary and my sister. The truth in the sketch of her character here given was acknowledged with gratitude by her nearest relatives. She was eloquent in conversation, energetic upon public matters, open in respect to these, but slow to communicate her personal feelings. Upon these she never touched in her intercourse with me, so that I could not regard myself as her confidential friend, and was accordingly surprised when I learnt she had left me a legacy of 100*l.* as a token of her esteem. See in further illustration, the second stanza inscribed upon her cenotaph in Coleorton Church.

507. * *Elegiac Musings in the Grounds of Coleorton Hall.* [xiii.]

These verses were in fact composed on horseback during a storm, whilst I was on my way from Coleorton to Cambridge. They are alluded to elsewhere. [Intercalated by Mrs. Quillinan—My father was on my pony, which he rode all the way from Rydal to Cambridge that I might have the comfort and pleasure of a horse at Cambridge. The storm of wind and rain on this day was so violent that the coach in which my mother and I travelled, the same coach, was all but blown over, and had the coachman drawn up as he attempted to do at one of his halting-places, we must have been upset. My father and his pony were several times actually blown out of the road. D. Q.]

508. *Charles Lamb.* [xiv.]

‘From the most gentle creature nursed in fields.’

This way of indicating the *name* of my lamented friend has been found fault with; perhaps rightly so; but I may say in justification of the double sense of the word, that similar allusions are not uncommon in epitaphs. One of the best in our language in verse I ever read, was upon a person who bore the name of Palmer; and the course of the thought, throughout, turned upon the Life of the Departed, considered as a pilgrimage. Nor can I think that the objection in the present case will have much force with any one who remembers Charles Lamb’s beautiful sonnet addressed to his own name, and ending—

‘No deed of mine shall shame thee, gentle name!’

509. * *Ibid.*

Light will be thrown upon the tragic circumstance alluded to in this Poem when, after the death of Charles Lamb’s sister, his biographer, Mr. Serjeant Talfourd, shall be at liberty to relate particulars which could not, at the time when his Memoir was written, be given to the public. Mary Lamb was ten years older than her brother, and has survived him as long a time. Were I to give way to my own feelings, I should dwell not only on her genius and intellectual powers, but upon the delicacy and refinement of manner which she maintained inviolable under most trying circumstances. She was loved and honoured by all her brother’s friends, and others, some of them strange characters.

whom his philanthropic peculiarities induced him to countenance. The death of C. Lamb himself was doubtless hastened by his sorrow for that of Coleridge, to whom he had been attached from the time of their being schoolfellows at Christ's Hospital. Lamb was a good Latin scholar, and probably would have gone to college upon one of the School foundations but for the impediment in his speech. Had such been his lot, he would have probably been preserved from the indulgences of social humours and fancies which were often injurious to himself and causes of severe regret to his friends, without really benefiting the object of his misapplied kindness.

510. * *Extempore Effusion upon the Death of James Hogg.* [xv.]

These verses were written extempore immediately after reading a notice of the Ettrick Shepherd's death in the Newcastle Paper, to the Editor of which I sent a copy for publication. The persons lamented in these Verses were all either of my friends or acquaintance. In Lockhart's Life of Sir Walter Scott an account is given of my first meeting with him in 1803. How the Ettrick Shepherd and I became known to each other has already been mentioned in these Notes. He was undoubtedly a man of original genius, but of coarse manners and low and offensive opinions. Of Coleridge and Lamb I need not speak here. Crabbe I have met in London at Mr. Rogers', but more frequently and favourably at Mr. Hoare's upon Hampstead Heath. Every Spring he used to pay that family a visit of some length, and was upon terms of intimate friendship with Mrs. Hoare, and still more with her daughter-in-law, who has a large collection of his letters addressed to herself. After the Poet's decease application was made to her to give up these letters to his biographer, that they, or at least a part of them, might be given to the public. She hesitated to comply, and asked my opinion on the subject. 'By no means,' was my answer, grounded not upon any objection there might be to publishing a selection from those letters, but from an aversion I have always felt to meet idle curiosity by calling back the recently departed to become the object of trivial and familiar gossip. Crabbe obviously for the most part preferred the company of women to that of men; for this among other reasons, that he did not like to be put upon the stretch in general conversation. Accordingly, in miscel-

laneous society his talk was so much below what might have been expected from a man so deservedly celebrated, that to me it seemed trifling. It must upon other occasions have been of a different character, as I found in our rambles together on Hampstead Heath; and not so much so from a readiness to communicate his knowledge of life and manners as of natural history in all its branches. His mind was inquisitive, and he seems to have taken refuge from a remembrance of the distresses he had gone through in these studies and the employments to which they led. Moreover such contemplations might tend profitably to counterbalance the painful truths which he had collected from his intercourse with mankind. Had I been more intimate with him I should have ventured to touch upon his office as a Minister of the Gospel, and how far his heart and soul were in it, so as to make him a zealous and diligent labourer. In poetry, tho' he wrote much, as we all know, he assuredly was not so. I happened once to speak of pains as necessary to produce merit of a certain kind which I highly valued. His observation was, ‘It is not worth while.’ You are right, thought I, if the labour encroaches upon the time due to teach truth as a steward of the mysteries of God; but if poetry is to be produced at all, make what you do produce as good as you can. Mr. Rogers once told me that he expressed his regret to Crabbe that he wrote in his late works so much less correctly than in his earlier. ‘Yes,’ replied he, ‘but then I had a reputation to make; now I can afford to relax.’ Whether it was from a modest estimate of his own qualifications or from causes less creditable, his motives for writing verse and his hopes and aims were not so high as is to be desired. After being silent for more than twenty years he again applied himself to poetry, upon the spur of applause he received from the periodical publications of the day, as he himself tells us in one of his Prefaces. Is it not to be lamented that a man who was so conversant with permanent truth, and whose writings are so valuable an acquisition to our country’s literature, should have required an impulse from such a quarter?*

* In pencil on opposite page, by Mrs. Quillinan—Daddy dear, I don’t like this. Think how many reasons there were to depress his Muse—to say nothing of his duties as a Priest, and probably he found poetry interfere with them. He did not require such praise to make him write, but it just put it into his heart to try again, and gave him the courage to do so. [See Notes and Illustrations at close. G]

Mrs. Hemans was unfortunate as a Poetess in being obliged by circumstances to write for money, and that so frequently and so much, that she was compelled to look out for subjects wherever she could find them, and to write as expeditiously as possible. As a woman she was to a considerable degree a spoilt child of the world. She had been early in life distinguished for talents, and poems of hers were published whilst she was a girl. She had also been handsome in her youth, but her education had been most unfortunate. She was totally ignorant of housewifery, and could as easily have managed the spear of Minerva as her needle. It was from observing these deficiencies that one day, while she was under my roof, I purposely directed her attention to household economy, and told her I had purchased scales which I intended to present to a young lady as a wedding present; pointed out their utility (for her especial benefit), and said that no ménage ought to be without them. Mrs. Hemans, not in the least suspecting my drift, reported this saying in a letter to a friend at the time, as a proof of my simplicity. Being disposed to make large allowances for the faults of her education and the circumstances in which she was placed, I felt most kindly disposed towards her and took her part upon all occasions, and I was not a little affected by learning that after she withdrew to Ireland a long and severe illness raised her spirit as it depressed her body. This I heard from her most intimate friends, and there is striking evidence of it in a poem entitled [Blank; and in pencil on opposite page—Do you mean a Sonnet entitled 'Sabbath Sonnet,' composed by Mrs. Hemans, April 26th, 1835, a few days before her death?

‘How many blessed groups this hour are wending!']

These notices of Mrs. Hemans would be very unsatisfactory to her intimate friends, as indeed they are to myself, not so much for what is said, but what for brevity's sake is left unsaid. Let it suffice to add there was much sympathy between us, and if opportunity had been allowed me to see more of her, I should have loved and valued her accordingly. As it is, I remember her with true affection for her amiable qualities, and above all for her delicate and irreproachable conduct during her long separation from an unfeeling husband, whom she had been led to marry from the romantic notions of inexperienced youth. Upon this husband I never heard her cast the least reproach, nor did I

ever hear her even name him, though she did not forbear wholly to touch upon her domestic position ; but never so as that any fault could be found with her manner of adverting to it.

511. *Dead Friends : ‘Immortals.’* [xv.]

Walter Scott	died	21st Sept. 1832.
S. T. Coleridge ,	25th July	1834.
Charles Lamb ,	27th Dec.	1834.
Geo. Crabbe ,	3rd Feb.	1832.
Felicia Hemans ,	16th May	1835.

512. * *Ode : Intimations of Immortality, from Recollections of early Childhood.* [Headed in I.F. mss. ‘The Ode.’]

This was composed during my residence at Town-End, Grasmere. Two years at least passed between the writing of the four first stanzas and the remaining part. To the attentive and competent reader the whole sufficiently explains itself, but there may be no harm in adverting here to particular feelings or *experiences* of my own mind on which the structure of the poem partly rests. Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I have said elsewhere

‘A simple child
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?’*

But it was not so much from the source of animal vivacity that my difficulty came as from a sense of the indomitableness of the spirit within me. I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost to persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated in something of the same way to heaven. With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality. At that time I was afraid of such processes. In later periods of life I have deplored,

* In pencil on opposite page—But this first stanza of ‘We are Seven’ is Coleridge’s Jem and all (Mr. Quillinan).

as we have all reason to do, a subjugation of an opposite character, and have rejoiced over the remembrances, as is expressed in the lines, ‘Obstinate questionings,’ &c. To that dreamlike vividness and splendour which invest objects of sight in childhood, every one, I believe, if he would look back, could bear testimony, and I need not dwell upon it here; but having in the Poem regarded it as presumptive evidence of a prior state of existence, I think it right to protest against a conclusion which has given pain to some good and pious persons, that I meant to inculcate such a belief. It is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith as more than an element in our instincts of immortality. But let us bear in mind that, though the idea is not advanced in Revelation, there is nothing there to contradict it, and the fall of man presents an analogy in its favour. Accordingly, a pre-existent state has entered into the popular creeds of many nations, and among all persons acquainted with classic literature is known as an ingredient in Platonic philosophy. Archimedes said that he could move the world if he had a point whereon to rest his machine. Who has not felt the same aspirations as regards the world of his own mind? Having to wield some of its elements when I was impelled to write this poem on the ‘Immortality of the Soul,’ I took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorising me to make for my purpose the best use of it I could as a Poet.

XXV. ‘THE EXCURSION.’

513. * *On the leading Characters and Scenes of the Poem.*

Something must now be said of this Poem, but chiefly, as has been done through the whole of these Notes, with reference to my personal friends, and especially to her [Miss Fenwick] who has perseveringly taken them down from my dictation. Towards the close of the 1st book, stand the lines that were first written, beginning ‘Nine tedious years,’ and ending ‘last human tenant of these ruined walls.’ These were composed in 1795, at Racedown; and for several passages describing the employment and demeanour of Margaret during her affliction, I was indebted to observations made in Dorsetshire, and afterwards at Alfoxden, in Somersetshire, where I resided in 1797 and 1798. The lines

towards the conclusion of the 4th book, ‘Despondency corrected,’ beginning ‘For the man who in this spirit,’ to the words ‘intellectual soul,’ were in order of time composed the next, either at Racedown or Alfoxden, I do not remember which. The rest of the poem was written in the vale of Grasmere, chiefly during our residence at Allan Bank. The long poem on my own education was, together with many minor poems, composed while we lived at the cottage at Town-End. Perhaps my purpose of giving an additional interest to these my poems, in the eyes of my nearest and dearest friends, may be promoted by saying a few words upon the character of the ‘Wanderer,’ the ‘Solitary,’ and the ‘Pastor,’ and some other of the persons introduced. And first of the principal one, the ‘Wanderer.’

My lamented friend Southey (for this is written a month after his decease*) used to say that had he been a Papist, the course of life which would in all probability have been his, was the one for which he was most fitted and most to his mind, that of a Benedictine Monk, in a Convent, furnished, as many once were, and some still are, with an inexhaustible library. *Books*, as appears from many passages in his writings, and was evident to those who had opportunities of observing his daily life, were, in fact, *his passion*; and *wandering*, I can with truth affirm, was mine; but this propensity in me was happily counteracted by inability from want of fortune to fulfil my wishes.

But had I been born in a class which would have deprived me of what is called a liberal education, it is not unlikely that, being strong in body, I should have taken to a way of life such as that in which my ‘Pedlar’ passed the greater part of his days. At all events, I am here called upon freely to acknowledge that the character I have represented in his person is chiefly an idea of what I fancied my own character might have become in his circumstances.

Nevertheless much of what he says and does had an external existence, that fell under my own youthful and subsequent observation.

An individual, named Patrick, by birth and education a Scotchman, followed this humble occupation for many years, and afterwards settled in the town of Kendal. He married a kinswoman of my wife’s, and her sister Sarah was brought up

* Which took place in March, 1843.

from early childhood under this good man's eye.* My own imaginations I was happy to find clothed in reality, and fresh ones suggested, by what she reported of this man's tenderness of heart, his strong and pure imagination, and his solid attainments in literature, chiefly religious, whether in prose or verse. At Hawkshead also, while I was a school-boy, there occasionally resided a packman (the name then generally given to this calling), with whom I had frequent conversations upon what had befallen him, and what he had observed during his wandering life, and, as was natural, we took much to each other; and upon the subject of Pedlarism in general, as *then* followed, and its favourableness to an intimate knowledge of human concerns, not merely among the humbler classes of society, I need say nothing here in addition to what is to be found in 'The Excursion,' and a note attached to it.

Now for the *Solitary*. Of him I have much less to say. Not long after we took up our abode at Grasmere, came to reside there, from what motive I either never knew or have forgotten, a Scotchman, a little past the middle of life, who had for many years been chaplain to a Highland regiment. He was in no respect, as far as I know, an interesting character, though in his appearance there was a good deal that attracted attention, as if he had been shattered in fortune, and not happy in mind. Of his quondam position I availed myself to connect with the 'Wanderer,' also a Scotchman, a character suitable to my purpose, the elements of which I drew from several persons with whom I had been connected, and who fell under my observation during frequent residences in London at the beginning of the French Revolution. The chief of these was, one may now say, a Mr. Fawcett, a preacher at a Dissenting meeting-house at the Old Jewry. It happened to me several times to be one of his congregation through my connection with Mr. Nicholson of Cateaton Street, Strand, who, at a time when I had not many acquaintances in London, used often to invite me to dine with him on Sundays; and I took that opportunity (Mr. N. being a Dissenter) of going to hear Fawcett, who was an able and eloquent man. He published a poem on War, which had a good deal of merit, and made me think more about him than I

* In pencil on opposite page—Sarah went to Kendal on our mother's death, but Mr. P. died in the course of a year or two. M. W.

should otherwise have done. But his Christianity was probably never very deeply rooted ; and, like many others in those times of like shewy talents, he had not strength of character to withstand the effects of the French Revolution, and of the wild and lax opinions which had done so much towards producing it, and far more in carrying it forward in its extremes. Poor Fawcett, I have been told, became pretty much such a person as I have described, and early disappeared from the stage, having fallen into habits of intemperance, which I have heard (though I will not answer for the fact) hastened his death. Of him I need say no more. There were many like him at that time, which the world will never be without, but which were more numerous then, for reasons too obvious to be dwelt upon.

The Pastor.—To what is said of the ‘ Pastor’ in the poem, I have little to add but what may be deemed superfluous. It has ever appeared to me highly favourable to the beneficial influence of the Church of England upon all gradations and classes of society, that the patronage of its benefices is in numerous instances attached to the estates of noble families of ancient gentry ; and accordingly I am gratified by the opportunity afforded me in ‘ The Excursion,’ to pourtray the character of a country clergyman of more than ordinary talents, born and bred in the upper ranks of society so as to partake of their refinements, and at the same time brought by his pastoral office and his love of rural life into intimate connection with the peasantry of his native district.

To illustrate the relation which in my mind this ‘ Pastor’ bore to the ‘ Wanderer,’ and the resemblances between them, or rather the points of community in their nature, I likened one to an oak, and the other to a sycamore ; and having here referred to this comparison, I need only add, I had no one individual in my mind, wishing rather to embody this idea than to break in upon the simplicity of it by traits of individual character, or of any peculiarity of opinion.

And now for a few words upon the scene where these interviews and conversations are supposed to occur.

The scene of the first book of the poem is, I must own, laid in a tract of country not sufficiently near to that which soon comes into view in the second book, to agree with the fact. All that relates to Margaret, and the ruined cottage, &c., was taken

from observations made in the south-west of England, and certainly it would require more than seven-leagued boots to stretch in one morning from a common in Somersetshire, or Dorsetshire, to the heights of Furness Fells, and the deep valleys they embosom. For this dealing with space, I need make, I trust, no apology; but my friends may be amused by the truth.

In the poem, I suppose that the Pedlar and I ascended from a plain country up the vale of Langdale, and struck off a good way above the chapel to the western side of the Vale. We ascended the hill, and thence looked down upon the circular recess in which lies Blea Tarn, chosen by the ‘Solitary’ for his retreat. After we quit his cottage, passing over a low ridge, we descend into another Vale, that of Little Langdale, towards the head of which stands embowered, or partly shaded by yews and other trees, something between a cottage and a mansion, or gentleman’s house, such as they once were in this country. This I convert into the parsonage, and at the same time, and as by the waving of a magic wand, I turn the comparatively confined Vale of Langdale, its tarn, and the rude chapel which once adorned the valley, into the stately and comparatively spacious Vale of Grasmere and its ancient parish church; and upon the side of Loughrigg Fell, at the foot of the Lake, and looking down upon it and the whole Vale and its accompanying mountains, the ‘Pastor’ is supposed by me to stand, when at sunset he addresses his companions in words which I hope my readers may remember,* or I should not have taken the trouble of giving so much in detail the materials on which my mind actually worked.

Now for a few particulars of *fact*, respecting the persons whose stories are told or characters described by the different speakers. To Margaret I have already alluded. I will add here that the lines beginning,

‘She was a woman of a steady mind,’
and,

‘Live on earth a life of happiness,’

faithfully delineate, as far as they go, the character possessed in common by many women whom it has been my happiness to know in humble life; and that several of the most touching things which she is represented as saying and doing are taken from actual observation of the distresses and trials under which

* Excursion; book the last, near the conclusion.

different persons were suffering, some of them strangers to me, and others daily under my notice.

I was born too late to have a distinct remembrance of the origin of the American war; but the state in which I represent Robert's mind to be, I had frequent opportunities of observing at the commencement of our rupture with France in 1793; opportunities of which I availed myself in the story of the 'Female Vagrant,' as told in the poem on 'Guilt and Sorrow.' The account given by the 'Solitary,' towards the close of the second book, in all that belongs to the character of the old man, was taken from a Grasmere pauper, who was boarded in the last house quitting the Vale on the road to Ambleside; the character of his hostess, and all that befell the poor man upon the mountain, belongs to Paterdale. The woman I knew well; her name was Ruth Jackson, and she was exactly such a person as I describe. The ruins of the old chapel, among which the old man was found lying, may yet be traced, and stood upon the ridge that divides Paterdale from Boardale and Martindale, having been placed there for the convenience of both districts. The glorious appearance disclosed above and among the mountains, was described partly from what my friend Mr. Luff, who then lived in Paterdale, witnessed upon this melancholy occasion, and partly from what Mrs. Wordsworth and I had seen, in company with Sir G. and Lady Beaumont, above Hartshope Hall, in our way from Paterdale to Ambleside.

And now for a few words upon the church, its monuments, and of the deceased who are spoken of as lying in the surrounding churchyard. But first for the one picture given by the 'Wanderer' of the living. In this nothing is introduced but what was taken from Nature, and real life. The cottage was called Hackett, and stands, as described, on the southern extremity of the ridge which separates the two Langdales. The pair who inhabited it were called Jonathan and Betty Yewdale. Once when our children were ill, of whooping-cough I think, we took them for change of air to this cottage, and were in the habit of going there to drink tea upon fine summer afternoons; so that we became intimately acquainted with the characters, habits, and lives of these good, and let me say, in the main, wise people. The matron had, in her early youth, been a servant in a house at Hawkshead, where several boys boarded, while I

was a schoolboy there. I did not remember her as having served in that capacity ; but we had many little anecdotes to tell to each other of remarkable boys, incidents, and adventures, which had made a noise in their day in that small town. These two persons were induced afterwards to settle at Rydal, where they both died.

Church and Churchyard.—The church, as already noticed, is that of Grasmere. The interior of it has been improved lately and made warmer by underdrawing the roof, and raising the floor ; but the rude and antique majesty of its former appearance has been impaired by painting the rafters ; and the oak benches, with a simple rail at the back dividing them from each other, have given way to seats that have more the appearance of pews. It is remarkable that, excepting only the pew belonging to Rydal Hall, that to Rydal Mount, the one to the parsonage, and, I believe, another, the men and women still continue, as used to be the custom in Wales, to sit separate from each other. Is this practice as old as the Reformation ? and when and how did it originate ? In the Jewish synagogues, and in Lady Huntingdon's chapels, the sexes are divided in the same way. In the adjoining churchyard greater changes have taken place ; it is now not a little crowded with tombstones ; and near the school-house, which stands in the churchyard, is an ugly structure, built to receive the hearse, which is recently come into use. It would not be worth while to allude to this building, or the hearse-vehicle it contains, but that the latter has been the means of introducing a change much to be lamented in the mode of conducting funerals among the mountains. Now, the coffin is lodged in the hearse at the door of the house of the deceased, and the corpse is so conveyed to the churchyard gate. All the solemnity which formerly attended its progress, as described in this poem, is put an end to. So much do I regret this, that I beg to be excused for giving utterance here to a wish that, should it befall me to die at Rydal Mount, my own body may be carried to Grasmere Church after the manner in which, till lately, that of every one was borne to the place of sepulchre here, namely, on the shoulders of neighbours ; no house being passed without some words of a funeral psalm being sung at the time by the attendants bearing it. When I put into the mouth of the ‘Wanderer,’ ‘Many precious rites and customs of our rural ancestry

are gone, or stealing from us,' 'this, I hope, will last for ever,' and what follows, little did I foresee that the observance and mode of proceeding which had often affected me so much would so soon be superseded.

Having said much of the injury done to this churchyard, let me add, that one is at liberty to look forward to a time when, by the growth of the yew-trees thriving there, a solemnity will be spread over the place that will in some degree make amends for the old simple character which has already been so much encroached upon, and will be still more every year. I will here set down, by way of memorial, that my friend Sir G. Beaumont, having long ago purchased the beautiful piece of water called Loughrigg Tarn, on the banks of which he intended to build, I told him that a person in Kendal who was attached to the place wished to purchase it. Sir George, finding the possession of no use to him, consented to part with it, and placed the purchase-money, 20*l.*, at my disposal, for any local use which I thought proper. Accordingly, I resolved to plant yew-trees in the churchyard; and had four pretty strong large oak enclosures made, in each of which was planted under my own eye, and principally, if not entirely, by my own hand, two young trees, with the intention of leaving the one that throve best to stand. Many years after, Mr. Barber, who will long be remembered in Grasmere, Mr. Greenwood (the chief landed proprietor), and myself, had four other enclosures made in the churchyard at our own expense, in each of which was planted a tree taken from its neighbour, and they all stand thriving admirably, the fences having been removed as no longer necessary. May the trees be taken care of hereafter, when we are all gone; and some of them will perhaps, at some far-distant time, rival the majesty of the yew of Lorton, and those which I have described as growing at Borrowdale, where they are still to be seen in grand assemblage.

And now for the persons that are selected as lying in the churchyard. But first for the individual whose grave is prepared to receive him.

His story is here truly related. He was a schoolfellow of mine for some years. He came to us when he was at least seventeen years of age, very tall, robust, and full grown. This prevented him from falling into the amusements and games of

the school ; consequently, he gave more time to books. He was not remarkably bright or quick, but, by industry, he made a progress more than respectable. His parents not being wealthy enough to send him to college when he left Hawkshead, he became a schoolmaster, with a view to preparing himself for holy orders. About this time he fell in love, as related in the poem, and every thing followed as there described, except that I do not know exactly when and where he died. The number of youths that came to Hawkshead school from the families of the humble yeomanry, to be educated to a certain degree of scholarship, as a preparation for the church, was considerable ; and the fortunes of those persons in after life various of course, and some not a little remarkable. I have now one of this class in my eye who became an usher in a preparatory school, and ended in making a large fortune. His manners, when he came to Hawkshead, were as uncouth as well could be ; but he had good abilities, with skill to turn them to account, and when the master of the school to which he was usher died, he stept into his place, and became proprietor of the establishment. He continued to manage it with such address, and so much to the taste of what is called high society and the fashionable world, that no school of the kind, even till he retired, was in such high request. Ministers of State, the wealthiest gentry, and nobility of the first rank, vied with each other in bespeaking a place for their sons in the seminary of this fortunate teacher. [In pencil on opposite page—Mr. Pearson.] In the solitude of Grasmere, while living as a married man in a cottage of 8*l.* per annum rent, I often used to smile at the tales which reached me of the brilliant career of this quondam clown—for such in reality he was, in manners and appearance, before he was polished a little by attrition with gentlemen's sons trained at Hawkshead, rough and rude as many of our families were. Not 200 yards from the cottage in Grasmere just mentioned, to which I retired, this gentleman, who many years afterwards purchased a small estate in the neighbourhood, is now erecting a boat-house, with an upper story to be resorted to as an entertaining room when he and his associates may feel inclined to take their pastime on the Lake. Every passenger will be disgusted with the sight of this edifice, not merely as a tasteless thing in itself, but as utterly out of place, and peculiarly fitted, as far as it is observed (and it ob-

trudes itself on notice at every point of view), to mar the beauty and destroy the pastoral simplicity of the Vale. For my own part, and that of my household, it is our utter detestation, standing by a shore to which, before the high road was made to pass that way, we used daily and hourly to repair for seclusion and for the shelter of a grove, under which I composed many of my poems—the ‘Brothers’ especially; and for this reason we gave the grove that name. ‘That which each man loved and prized in his peculiar nook of earth dies with him or is changed.’ So much for my old schoolfellow and his exploits. I will only add that, as the foundation has twice failed, from the Lake no doubt being intolerant of the intrusion, there is some ground for hoping that the impertinent structure will not stand. It has been rebuilt in somewhat better taste, and much as one wishes it away, it is not now so very unsightly. The structure is an emblem of the man. Perseverance has conquered difficulties, and given something of form and polish to rudeness. [In pencil on opposite page—This boathouse, badly built, gave way, and was rebuilt. It again tumbled, and was a third time reconstructed, but in a better fashion than before. It is not now, *per se*, an ugly building, however obtrusive it may be.]

The Miner, next described as having found his treasure after twice ten years of labour, lived in Paterdale, and the story is true to the letter. It seems to me, however, rather remarkable, that the strength of mind which had supported him through his long unrewarded labour, did not enable him to bear its successful issue. Several times in the course of my life I have heard of sudden influxes of great wealth being followed by derangement; and, in one instance, the shock of good fortune was so great as to produce absolute idiocy. But these all happened where there had been little or no previous effort to acquire the riches, and therefore such a consequence might the more naturally be expected, than in the case of the solitary miner. In reviewing his story, one cannot but regret that such perseverance was not sustained by a worthier object. Archimedes leaped out of his bath and ran about the streets, proclaiming his discovery in a transport of joy; but we are not told that he lost either his life or his senses in consequence.

The next character, to whom the priest is led by contrast with the resoluteness displayed by the foregoing, is taken from

a person born and bred in Grasmere, by name Dawson, and whose talents, dispositions, and way of life, were such as are here delineated. I did not know him, but all was fresh in memory when we settled at Grasmere in the beginning of the century. From this point the conversation leads to the mention of two individuals, who by their several fortunes were, at different times, driven to take refuge at the small and obscure town of Hawkshead on the skirt of these mountains. Their stories I had from the dear old dame with whom, as a school-boy, and afterwards, I lodged for the space of nearly ten years. The elder, the Jacobite, was named Drummond, and was of a high family in Scotland ; the Hanoverian Whig bore the name of Vandeput,* and might, perhaps, be a descendant of some Dutchman who had come over in the train of King William. At all events, his zeal was such, that he ruined himself by a contest for the representation of London or Westminster, undertaken to support his Party, and retired to this corner of the world, selected as it had been by Drummond for that obscurity which, since visiting the Lakes became fashionable, it has no longer retained. So much was this region considered out of the way till a late period, that persons who had fled from justice used often to resort hither for concealment, and some were so bold as to not unfrequently make excursions from the place of their retreat for the purpose of committing fresh offences. Such was particularly the case with two brothers of the name of Weston, who took up their abode at Old Brathay, I think about seventy years ago. They were highwaymen, and lived there some time without being discovered, though it was known that they often disappeared, in a way, and upon errands, which could not be accounted for. Their horses were noticed as being of a choice breed, and I have heard from the Relph family, one of whom was a saddler in the town of Kendal, that they were curious in their saddles, and housings, and accoutrements of their horses. They, as I have heard, and as was universally believed, were, in the end, both taken and hanged.

Tall was her stature, her complexion dark, and saturnine.— This person lived at Town-End, and was almost our next neighbour. I have little to notice concerning her beyond what is said in the poem. She was a most striking instance how far a

* Sir George Vandeput.

woman may surpass in talent, in knowledge, and culture of mind, those with and among whom she lives, and yet fall below them in Christian virtues of the heart and spirit. It seemed almost, and I say it with grief, that in proportion as she excelled in the one, she failed in the other. How frequently has one to observe in both sexes the same thing, and how mortifying is the reflection!

As on a sunny bank the tender lamb.—The story that follows was told to Mrs. Wordsworth and my sister, by the sister of this unhappy young woman. Every particular was exactly as I have related. The party was not known to me, though she lived at Hawkshead; but it was after I left school. The clergyman who administered comfort to her in her distress I knew well. Her sister, who told the story, was the wife of a leading yeoman in the Vale of Grasmere, and they were an affectionate pair, and greatly respected by every one who knew them. Neither lived to be old; and their estate, which was, perhaps, the most considerable then in the Vale, and was endeared to them by many remembrances of a salutary character, not easily understood or sympathised with by those who are born to great affluence, past to their eldest son, according to the practice of these Vales, who died soon after he came into possession. He was an amiable and promising youth, but was succeeded by an only brother, a good-natured man, who fell into habits of drinking, by which he gradually reduced his property, and the other day the last acre of it was sold, and his wife and children, and he himself still surviving, have very little left to live upon; which it would not, perhaps, have been worth while to record here, but that through all trials this woman has proved a model of patience, meekness, affectionate forbearance, and forgiveness. Their eldest son, who through the vices of his father has thus been robbed of an ancient family inheritance, was never heard to murmur or complain against the cause of their distress, and is now, deservedly, the chief prop of his mother's hopes.

Book VII.—The clergyman and his family described at the beginning of this book were, during many years, our principal associates in the Vale of Grasmere, unless I were to except our very nearest neighbours. I have entered so particularly into the main points of their history, that I will barely testify in prose that (with the single exception of the particulars of their journey

to Grasmere, which, however, was exactly copied from real life in another instance) the whole that I have said of them is as faithful to the truth as words can make it. There was much talent in the family, and the eldest son was distinguished for poetical talent, of which a specimen is given in my Notes to the Sonnets on the Duddon. Once, when in our cottage at Town-End, I was talking with him about poetry, in the course of our conversation I presumed to find fault with the versification of Pope, of whom he was an enthusiastic admirer. He defended him with a warmth that indicated much irritation ; nevertheless I would not abandon my point, and said, ‘In compass and variety of sound your own versification surpasses his.’ Never shall I forget the change in his countenance and tone of voice : the storm was laid in a moment, he no longer disputed my judgment, and I passed immediately in his mind, no doubt, for as great a critic as ever lived. I ought to add, he was a clergyman and a well-educated man, and his verbal memory was the most remarkable of any individual I have known, except a Mr. Archer, an Irishman, who lived several years in this neighbourhood, and who in this faculty was a prodigy : he afterwards became deranged, and I fear continues so if alive.

Then follows the character of Robert Walker, for which see Notes to the Duddon.

Next that of the *Deaf Man*, whose epitaph may be seen in the churchyard at the head of Hawes-Water, and whose qualities of mind and heart, and their benign influence in conjunction with his privation, I had from his relatives on the spot.

The *Blind Man*, next commemorated, was John Gough, of Kendal, a man known, far beyond his neighbourhood, for his talents and attainments in natural history and science.

Of the *Infants’ Grave* next noticed, I will only say, it is an exact picture of what fell under my own observation ; and all persons who are intimately acquainted with cottage life must often have observed like instances of the working of the domestic affections.

A volley thrice repeated.—This young volunteer bore the name of Dawson, and was younger brother, if I am not mistaken, to the prodigal of whose character and fortunes an account is given towards the beginning of the preceding book. The father of the family I knew well ; he was a man of literary education

and [considerable] experience in society, much beyond what was common among the inhabitants of the Vale. He had lived a good while in the Highlands of Scotland as a manager of iron-works at Bunaw, and had acted as clerk to one of my predecessors in the office of distributor of stamps, when he used to travel round the country collecting and bringing home the money due to Government in gold, which it may be worth while to mention, for the sake of my friends, was deposited in the cell or iron closet under the west window, which still exists, with the iron doors that guarded the property. This, of course, was before the time of bills and notes. The two sons of this person had no doubt been led by the knowledge of their father to take more delight in scholarship, and had been accustomed, in their own minds, to take a wider view of social interests, than was usual among their associates. The premature death of this gallant young man was much lamented, and as an attendant upon the funeral, I myself witnessed the ceremony, and the effect of it as described in the poems, ‘Tradition tells that in Eliza’s golden days,’ ‘A knight came on a war-horse,’ ‘The house is gone.’ The pillars of the gateway in front of the mansion remained when we first took up our abode at Grasmere. Two or three cottages still remain which are called Nott Houses, from the name of the gentleman (I have called him a knight) concerning whom these traditions survive. He was the ancestor of the *Knott* family, formerly considerable proprietors in the district. What follows in the discourse of the ‘Wanderer,’ upon the changes he had witnessed in rural life by the introduction of machinery, is truly described from what I myself saw during my boyhood and early youth, and from what was often told me by persons of this humble calling. Happily, most happily, for these mountains, the mischief was diverted from the banks of their beautiful streams, and transferred to open and flat counties abounding in coal, where the agency of steam was found much more effectual for carrying on those demoralising works. Had it not been for this invention, long before the present time, every torrent and river in this district would have had its factory, large and populous in proportion to the power of the water that could there be commanded. Parliament has interfered to prevent the night-work which was carried on in these mills as actively as during the day-time, and by necessity, still more perniciously; a sad disgrace to the pro-

prietors and to the nation which could so long tolerate such unnatural proceedings.

Reviewing, at this late period, 1843, what I put into the mouths of my interlocutors a few years after the commencement of the century, I grieve that so little progress has been made in diminishing the evils deplored, or promoting the benefits of education which the ‘Wanderer’ anticipates. The results of Lord Ashley’s labours to defer the time when children might legally be allowed to work in factories, and his endeavours to still further limit the hours of permitted labour, have fallen far short of his own humane wishes, and of those of every benevolent and right-minded man who has carefully attended to this subject; and in the present session of Parliament (1843) Sir James Graham’s attempt to establish a course of religious education among the children employed in factories has been abandoned, in consequence of what might easily have been foreseen, the vehement and turbulent opposition of the Dissenters; so that for many years to come it may be thought expedient to leave the religious instruction of children entirely in the hands of the several denominations of Christians in the Island, each body to work according to its own means and in its own way. Such is my own confidence, a confidence I share with many others of my most valued friends, in the superior advantages, both religious and social, which attend a course of instruction presided over and guided by the clergy of the Church of England, that I have no doubt, that if but once its members, lay and clerical, were duly sensible of those benefits, their Church would daily gain ground, and rapidly, upon every shape and fashion of Dissent; and in that case, a great majority in Parliament being sensible of these benefits, the ministers of the country might be emboldened, were it necessary, to apply funds of the State to the support of education on church principles. Before I conclude, I cannot forbear noticing the strenuous efforts made at this time in Parliament by so many persons to extend manufacturing and commercial industry at the expense of agricultural, though we have recently had abundant proofs that the apprehensions expressed by the ‘Wanderer’ were not groundless.

‘I spake of mischief by the wise diffused,
With gladness thinking that the more it spreads
The healthier, the securer we become;
Delusion which a moment may destroy !’

The Chartist are well aware of this possibility, and cling to it with an ardour and perseverance which nothing but wiser and more brotherly dealing towards the many on the part of the wealthy few can moderate or remove.

Book IX., towards conclusion.

'While from the grassy mountain's open side
We gazed.'

The point here fixed upon in my imagination is half way up the northern side of Loughrigg Fell, from which the 'Pastor' and his companions are supposed to look upwards to the sky and mountain-tops, and round the Vale, with the Lake lying immediately beneath them.

'But turned, not without welcome promise given
That he would share the pleasures and pursuits
Of yet another Summer's day, consumed
In wandering with us.'

When I reported this promise of the 'Solitary,' and long after, it was my wish, and I might say intention, that we should resume our wanderings and pass the borders into his native country, where, as I hoped, he might witness, in the society of the 'Wanderer,' some religious ceremony—a sacrament say, in the open fields, or a preaching among the mountains, which, by recalling to his mind the days of his early childhood, when he had been present on such occasions in company with his parents and nearest kindred, might have dissolved his heart into tenderness, and so done more towards restoring the Christian faith in which he had been educated, and, with that, contentedness and even cheerfulness of mind, than all that the 'Wanderer' and 'Pastor' by their several effusions and addresses had been enabled to effect. An issue like this was in my intentions, but alas!

'mid the wreck of is and was,
Things incomplete and purposes betrayed
Make sadder transits o'er thought's optic glass
Than noblest objects utterly decayed.'

Rydal Mount, June 24. 1843.
St. John Baptist Day.

Of the 'Church' in the 'Excursion' (Book v.) we find this additional morsel in a letter to Lady Frederick Bentinck (*Memoirs*, i. 156): 'The Church is a very ancient structure; some

persons now propose to ceil it, a project which, as a matter of taste and feeling, I utterly disapprove. At present, it is open to the rafters, and is accordingly spacious, and has a venerable appearance, favourable, when one first enters, to devotional impressions.'

514. *The Aristocracy of Nature.*

—‘much did he see of men.’ [‘Excursion,’ Book i. l. 344.]

At the risk of giving a shock to the prejudices of artificial society, I have ever been ready to pay homage to the aristocracy of nature; under a conviction that vigorous human-heartedness is the constituent principle of true taste. It may still, however, be satisfactory to have prose testimony how far a Character, employed for purposes of imagination, is founded upon general fact. I, therefore, subjoin an extract from an author who had opportunities of being well acquainted with a class of men, from whom my own personal knowledge emboldened me to draw this portrait.

‘We learn from Cæsar and other Roman Writers, that the travelling merchants who frequented Gaul and other barbarous countries, either newly conquered by the Roman arms, or bordering on the Roman conquests, were ever the first to make the inhabitants of those countries familiarly acquainted with the Roman modes of life, and to inspire them with an inclination to follow the Roman fashions, and to enjoy Roman conveniences. In North America, travelling merchants from the settlements have done and continue to do much more towards civilising the Indian natives, than all the missionaries, Papist or Protestant, who have ever been sent among them.

‘It is farther to be observed, for the credit of this most useful class of men, that they commonly contribute, by their personal manners, no less than by the sale of their wares, to the refinement of the people among whom they travel. Their dealings form them to great quickness of wit and acuteness of judgment. Having constant occasion to recommend themselves and their goods, they acquire habits of the most obliging attention, and the most insinuating address. As in their peregrinations they have opportunity of contemplating the manners of various men and various cities, they become eminently skilled in the knowledge of the world. *As they wander, each alone, through*

thinly-inhabited districts they form habits of reflection and of sublime contemplation. With all these qualifications, no wonder that they should often be, in remote parts of the country, the best mirrors of fashion, and censors of manners ; and should contribute much to polish the roughness, and soften the rusticity of our peasantry. It is not more than twenty or thirty years since a young man going from any part of Scotland to England, of purpose to *carry the pack*, was considered as going to lead the life and acquire the fortune of a gentleman. When, after twenty years' absence, in that honourable line of employment, he returned with his acquisitions to his native country, he was regarded as a gentleman to all intents and purposes.' *Heron's Journey in Scotland*, Vol. i. p. 89.

515. *Eternity.*

'Lost in unsearchable Eternity!' ['Excursion,' Book iii. l. 112.]

Since this paragraph was composed, I have read with so much pleasure, in Burnet's *Theory of the Earth*, a passage expressing corresponding sentiments, excited by objects of a similar nature, that I cannot forbear to transcribe it.

'Siquid verò Natura nobis dedit spectaculum, in hâc tellure, verè gratum, et philosopho dignum, id semel mihi contigisse arbitror ; cùm ex celsissimâ rupe speculabundus ad oram maris Mediterranei, hinc aequor caeruleum, illinc tractus Alpinos prospexi; nihil quidem magis dispar aut dissimile, nec in suo genere, magis egregium et singulare. Hoc theatrum ego facilè praetulerim Romanis cunctis, Graecisve ; atque id quod natura hîc spectandum exhibit, scenicis ludis omnibus, aut amphitheatri certaminibus. Nihil hîc elegans aut venustum, sed ingens et magnificum, et quod placet magnitudine suâ et quâdam specie immensitatis. Hinc intuebar maris aequabilem superficiem, usque et usque diffusam, quantum maximum oculorum acies ferri potuit ; illinc disruptissimam terrae faciem, et vastas moles variè elevatas aut depressas, erectas, propendentes, reclinatas, coacer-vatas, omni situ inaequali et turbido. Placuit, ex hâc parte, Naturae unitas et simplicitas, et inexhausta quaedam planities ; ex alterâ, multiformis confusio magnorum corporum, et insanae rerum strages : quas cùm intuebar, non urbis alicujus aut oppidi, sed confracti mundi rudera, ante oculos habere mihi visus sum.'

‘In singulis ferè montibus erat aliquid insolens et mirabile, sed prae caeteris mihi placebat illa, quâ sedebam, rupes ; erat maxima et altissima, et quâ terram respiciebat, molliori ascensu altitudinem suam dissimulabat : quâ verò mare, horrendū praeceps, et quasi ad perpendiculum facta, instar parietis. Praetereà facies illa marina adeò erat laevis ac uniformis (quod in rupibus aliquando observare licet) ac si scissa fuisset à summo ad imum, in illo plano ; vel terrae motu aliquo, aut fulmine, divulsa.

‘Ima pars rupis erat cava, recessusque habuit, et saxeos specus, eentes in vacuum montem ; sive naturâ pridem factos, sive exesos mari, et undarum crebris ictibus : In hos enim cum impetu ruebant et fragore, aestuantis maris fluctus ; quos iterum spumantes reddidit antrum, et quasi ab imo ventre evomuit.

‘Dextrum latus montis erat praeruptum, aspero saxo et nudâ caute ; sinistrum non adeò neglexerat Natura, arboribus utpote ornatum : et prope pedem montis rivus limpidae aquae prorupit ; qui cùm vicinam vallem irrigaverat, lento motu serpens, et per varios maeandros, quasi ad protrahendam vitam, in magno mari absorptus subito periit. Denique in summo vertice promontorii, commodè eminebat saxum, cui insidebam contemplabundus. Vale augusta sedes, Rege digna : Augusta rupes, semper mihi memoranda !’ P. 89. *Telluris Theoria sacra, &c. Editio secunda.*

516. ‘*Of Mississippi, or that Northern Stream ;* William Gilbert.
[‘Excursion,’ Book iii. l. 935.]

‘A man is supposed to improve by going out into the *World*, by visiting *London*. Artificial man does ; he extends with his sphere ; but, alas ! that sphere is microscopic ; it is formed of minutiae, and he surrenders his genuine vision to the artist, in order to embrace it in his ken. His bodily senses grow acute, even to barren and inhuman pruriency ; while his mental become proportionally obtuse. The reverse is the Man of Mind : he who is placed in the sphere of Nature and of God, might be a mock at Tattersall’s and Brooks’, and a sneer at St. James’s : he would certainly be swallowed alive by the first *Pizarro* that crossed him :—But when he walks along the river of Amazons ; when he rests his eye on the unrivalled Andes ; when he measures the long and watered savannah ; or contemplates, from a

sudden promontory, the distant, vast Pacific—and feels himself a freeman in this vast theatre, and commanding each ready produced fruit of this wilderness, and each progeny of this stream—his exaltation is not less than imperial. He is as gentle, too, as he is great: his emotions of tenderness keep pace with his elevation of sentiment; for he says, “These were made by a good Being, who, unsought by me, placed me here to enjoy them.” He becomes at once a child and a king. His mind is in himself; from hence he argues, and from hence he acts, and he argues unerringly, and acts magisterially: his mind in himself is also in his God; and therefore he loves, and therefore he soars.—From the notes upon ‘The Hurricane,’ a Poem, by William Gilbert.

The Reader, I am sure, will thank me for the above quotation, which, though from a strange book, is one of the finest passages of modern English prose.

517. *Richard Baxter.*

‘ ‘Tis, by comparison, an easy task
Earth to despise,’ &c. [‘Excursion,’ Book iv. ll. 131-2.]

See, upon this subject, Baxter’s most interesting review of his own opinions and sentiments in the decline of life. It may be found (lately reprinted) in Dr. Wordsworth’s *Ecclesiastical Biography*.

518. *Endowment of immortal Power.*

‘Alas! the endowment of Immortal Power,’ &c. [‘Excursion,’ Ibid. ll. 206
et seqq.]

This subject is treated at length in the Ode ‘Intimations of Immortality.’

519. *Samuel Daniel and Countess of Cumberland.* [‘Excursion,’ *ibid.* l. 326.]

‘Knowing the heart of Man is set to be,’ &c.

The passage quoted from Daniel is taken from a poem addressed to the Lady Margaret, Countess of Cumberland, and the two last lines, printed in Italics, are by him translated from Seneca. The whole Poem is very beautiful. I will transcribe four stanzas from it, as they contain an admirable picture of the state of a wise Man’s mind in a time of public commotion.

Nor is he moved with all the thunder-cracks
Of tyrants' threats, or with the surly brow
Of Power, that proudly sits on other's crimes;
Charged with more crying sins than those he checks.
The storms of sad confusion that may grow
Up in the present for the coming times,
Appal not him; that hath no side at all,
But of himself, and knows the worst can fall.

Although his heart (so near allied to earth)
Cannot but pity the perplexèd state
Of troublous and distressed mortality,
That thus make way unto the ugly birth
Of their own sorrows, and do still beget
Affliction upon Imbecility;
Yet seeing thus the course of things must run,
He looks thereon not strange, but as foredone.

And whilst distraught ambition compasses,
And is encompassed, while as craft deceives,
And is deceived: whilst man doth ransack man,
And builds on blood, and rises by distress;
And th' Inheritance of desolation leaves
To great-expecting hopes: He looks thereon,
As from the shore of peace, with unwet eye,
And bears no venture in Impiety.

Thus, Lady, fares that man that hath prepared
A rest for his desire; and sees all things
Beneath him; and hath learned this book of man,
Full of the notes of frailty; and compared
The best of glory with her sufferings:
By whom, I see, you labour all you can
To plant your heart! and set your thoughts as near
His glorious mansion as your powers can bear.'

520. *Spires.*

And spires whose "silent finger points to Heaven." [‘Excursion,’
Book vi. l. 19.]

An instinctive taste teaches men to build their churches in flat countries with spire-steeple, which as they cannot be referred to any other object, point as with silent finger to the sky and stars, and sometimes, when they reflect the brazen light of a rich though rainy sunset, appear like a pyramid of flame burning heaven-ward. See ‘The Friend,’ by S. T. Coleridge, No. 14, p. 223.

521. Sycamores.

‘That sycamore which annually holds
Within its shade as in a stately tent.’ [‘Excursion,’ Book vii. ll. 622-3.]

‘This sycamore oft musical with Bees ;
Such tents the Patriarch loved.’ S. T. COLERIDGE.

522. The Transitory.

‘Perish the roses and the flowers of Kings.’ [‘Excursion,’ Book vii. l. 990.]

The ‘Transit gloria mundi’ is finely expressed in the Introduction to the Foundation-charters of some of the ancient Abbeys. Some expressions here used are taken from that of the Abbey of St. Mary’s, Furness, the translation of which is as follows :

‘Considering every day the uncertainty of life, that the roses and flowers of Kings, Emperors, and Dukes, and the crowns and palms of all the great, wither and decay ; and that all things, with an uninterrupted course, tend to dissolution and death : I therefore,’ &c.

523. Dyer and ‘The Fleece.’

—————‘Earth has lent
Her waters, Air her breezes.’ [‘Excursion,’ Book viii. ll. 112-3.]

In treating this subject, it was impossible not to recollect, with gratitude, the pleasing picture, which, in his Poem of the Fleece, the excellent and amiable Dyer has given of the influences of manufacturing industry upon the face of this Island. He wrote at a time when machinery was first beginning to be introduced, and his benevolent heart prompted him to augur from it nothing but good. Truth has compelled me to dwell upon the baneful effects arising out of an ill-regulated and excessive application of powers so admirable in themselves.

524. Dr. Bell.

‘Binding herself by Statute.’ [‘Excursion,’ Book ix. l. 300.]

The discovery of Dr. Bell affords marvellous facilities for carrying this into effect ; and it is impossible to overrate the benefit which might accrue to humanity from the universal application of this simple engine under an enlightened and conscientious government.

II. LETTERS AND EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

NOTE.

On this division of the Prose, the Reader may see our Preface, Vol. I. G.

1. Autobiographical Memoranda dictated by William Wordsworth, P.L., at Rydal Mount, November 1847.

I WAS born at Cockermouth, in Cumberland, on April 7th, 1770, the second son of John Wordsworth, attorney-at-law, as lawyers of this class were then called, and law-agent to Sir James Lowther, afterwards Earl of Lonsdale. My mother was Anne, only daughter of William Cookson, mercer, of Penrith, and of Dorothy, born Crackanthorp, of the ancient family of that name, who from the times of Edward the Third had lived in Newbiggen Hall, Westmoreland. My grandfather was the first of the name of Wordsworth who came into Westmoreland, where he purchased the small estate of Sockbridge. He was descended from a family who had been settled at Peniston in Yorkshire, near the sources of the Don, probably before the Norman Conquest. Their names appear on different occasions in all the transactions, personal and public, connected with that parish; and I possess, through the kindness of Col. Beaumont, an almery made in 1325, at the expense of a William Wordsworth, as is expressed in a Latin inscription* carved upon it, which carries the pedigree of the family back four generations from himself.

The time of my infancy and early boyhood was passed partly at Cockermouth, and partly with my mother's parents at Penrith, where my mother, in the year 1778, died of a decline, brought on by a cold, the consequence of being put, at a friend's house in London, in what used to be called 'a best bedroom.' My father never recovered his usual cheerfulness of mind after this loss, and died when I was in my fourteenth year, a schoolboy, just returned from Hawkshead, whither I had been sent with my elder brother Richard, in my ninth year.

I remember my mother only in some few situations, one of which was her pinning a nosegay to my breast when I was going

* The original is as follows, some of the abbreviations being expanded: 'HOC OPUS FIEBAT ANNO DOMINI MCCCXXV EX SUMPTU WILLELMI WORDESWORTH FILII W. FIL. JOH. FIL. W. FIL. NICH. VIRI ELIZABETH FILIAE ET HEREDIS W. PROCTOR DE PENYSTON QUORUM ANIMABUS PROPITIETUR DEUS.'

On the almery are carved the letters 'I. H. S.' and 'M.'; also the emblem of the Holy Trinity.

For further information concerning this oak press, see Mr. Hunter's paper in *Gentleman's Magazine* for July, 1850, p. 43.

to say the catechism in the church, as was customary before Easter.* I remember also telling her on one week day that I had been at church, for our school stood in the churchyard, and we had frequent opportunities of seeing what was going on there. The occasion was, a woman doing penance in the church in a white sheet. My mother commended my having been present, expressing a hope that I should remember the circumstance for the rest of my life. ‘But,’ said I, ‘Mama, they did not give me a penny, as I had been told they would.’ ‘Oh,’ said she, recanting her praises, ‘if that was your motive, you were very properly disappointed.’

My last impression was having a glimpse of her on passing the door of her bedroom during her last illness, when she was reclining in her easy chair. An intimate friend of hers, Miss Hamilton by name, who was used to visit her at Cockermouth, told me that she once said to her, that the only one of her five children about whose future life she was anxious, was William; and he, she said, would be remarkable either for good or for evil. The cause of this was, that I was of a stiff, moody, and violent temper; so much so that I remember going once into the attics of my grandfather’s house at Penrith, upon some indignity having been put upon me, with an intention of destroying myself with one of the foils which I knew was kept there. I took the foil in hand, but my heart failed. Upon another occasion, while I was at my grandfather’s house at Penrith, along with my eldest brother, Richard, we were whipping tops together in the large drawing-room, on which the carpet was only laid down upon particular occasions. The walls were hung round with family pictures, and I said to my brother, ‘Dare you strike your whip through that old lady’s petticoat?’ He replied, ‘No, I won’t.’ ‘Then,’ said I, ‘here goes;’ and I struck my lash through her hooped petticoat, for which no doubt, though I have forgotten it, I was properly punished. But possibly, from some want of judgment in punishments inflicted, I had become perverse and obstinate in defying chastisement, and rather proud of it than otherwise.

Of my earliest days at school I have little to say, but that they were very happy ones, chiefly because I was left at liberty, then and in the vacations, to read whatever books I liked. For

* See Ecclesiastical Sonnets, Part III. Sonnet xxii. ‘On Catechising.’

example, I read all Fielding's works, *Don Quixote*, *Gil Blas*, and any part of Swift that I liked; *Gulliver's Travels*, and the *Tale of the Tub*, being both much to my taste. I was very much indebted to one of the ushers of Hawkshead School, by name Shaw, who taught me more of Latin in a fortnight than I had learnt during two preceding years at the school of Cockermouth. Unfortunately for me this excellent master left our school, and went to Stafford, where he taught for many years. It may be perhaps as well to mention, that the first verses which I wrote were a task imposed by my master; the subject, 'The Summer Vacation'; and of my own accord I added others upon 'Return to School.' There was nothing remarkable in either poem; but I was called upon, among other scholars, to write verses upon the completion of the second centenary from the foundation of the school in 1585, by Archbishop Sandys. These verses were much admired, far more than they deserved, for they were but a tame imitation of Pope's versification, and a little in his style. This exercise, however, put it into my head to compose verses from the impulse of my own mind, and I wrote, while yet a schoolboy, a long poem running upon my own adventures, and the scenery of the country in which I was brought up. The only part of that poem which has been preserved is the conclusion of it, which stands at the beginning of my collected Poems [‘Dear native regions,’ &c.].

In the month of October, 1787, I was sent to St. John's College, Cambridge, of which my uncle, Dr. Cookson, had been a fellow. The master, Dr. Chevallier, died very soon after;* and, according to the custom of that time, his body, after being placed in the coffin, was removed to the hall of the college, and the pall, spread over the coffin, was stuck over by copies of verses, English or Latin, the composition of the students of St. John's. My uncle seemed mortified when upon inquiry he learnt that none of these verses were from my pen, 'because,' said he, 'it would have been a fair opportunity for distinguishing yourself.' I did not, however, regret that I had been silent on this occasion, as I felt no interest in the deceased person, with whom I had had no intercourse, and whom I had never seen but during his walks in the college grounds.

When at school, I, with the other boys of the same standing,

* He was succeeded by Dr. Craven in 1789.

was put upon reading the first six books of Euclid, with the exception of the fifth; and also in algebra I learnt simple and quadratic equations; and this was for me unlucky, because I had a full twelvemonth's start of the freshmen of my year, and accordingly got into rather an idle way; reading nothing but classic authors according to my fancy, and Italian poetry. My Italian master was named Isola, and had been well acquainted with Gray the poet. As I took to these studies with much interest, he was proud of the progress I made. Under his correction I translated the *Vision of Mirza*, and two or three other papers of the *Spectator*, into Italian. In the month of August, 1790, I set off for the Continent, in companionship with Robert Jones, a Welshman, a fellow-collegian. We went staff in hand, without knapsacks, and carrying each his needments tied up in a pocket handkerchief, with about twenty pounds apiece in our pockets. We crossed from Dover and landed at Calais on the eve of the day when the king was to swear fidelity to the new constitution: an event which was solemnised with due pomp at Calais. On the afternoon of that day we started, and slept at Ardres. For what seemed best to me worth recording in this tour, see the 'Poem of my own Life.'*

After taking my degree in January, 1791, I went to London, stayed there some time, and then visited my friend Jones, who resided in the Vale of Clwydd, North Wales. Along with him I made a pedestrian tour through North Wales, for which also see the Poem.†

In the autumn of 1791 I went to Paris, where I stayed some little time, and then went to Orleans, with a view of being out of the way of my own countrymen, that I might learn to speak the language fluently. At Orleans, and Blois, and Paris, on my return, I passed fifteen or sixteen months.‡ It was a stirring time. The king was dethroned when I was at Blois, and the massacres of September took place when I was at Orleans. But for these matters see also the Poem. I came home before the execution of the king, and passed the subsequent time among my friends in London and elsewhere, till I settled with my only sister at Racedown in Dorsetshire, in the year 1796.

* Prelude, book vi.

† Ibid. book xiv.

‡ This is not quite correct; the time of his absence did not exceed thirteen months.

Here we were visited by Mr. Coleridge, then residing at Bristol; and for the sake of being near him when he had removed to Nether-Stowey, in Somersetshire, we removed to Alfoxden, three miles from that place. This was a very pleasant and productive time of my life. Coleridge, my sister, and I, set off on a tour to Linton and other places in Devonshire; and in order to defray his part of the expense, Coleridge on the same afternoon commenced his poem of the ‘Ancient Mariner,’ in which I was to have borne my part, and a few verses were written by me, and some assistance given in planning the poem; but our styles agreed so little, that I withdrew from the concern, and he finished it himself.

In the course of that spring I composed many poems, most of which were printed at Bristol, in one volume, by my friend Joseph Cottle, along with Coleridge’s ‘Ancient Mariner,’ and two or three other of his pieces.

In the autumn of 1798, Mr. Coleridge, a friend of his Mr. Chester, my sister, and I, crossed from Yarmouth to Hamburg, where we remained a few days, and saw, several times, Klopstock the poet. Mr. Coleridge and his friend went to Ratzburg, in the north of Germany, and my sister and I preferred going southward; and for the sake of cheapness, and the neighbourhood of the Hartz Mountains, we spent the winter at the old imperial city of Goslar. The winter was perishingly cold—the coldest of this century; and the good people with whom we lodged told me one morning, that they expected to find me frozen to death, my little sleeping room being immediately over an archway. However, neither my sister nor I took any harm.

We returned to England in the following spring, and went to visit our friends the Hutchinsons, at Sockburn-on-Tees, in the county of Durham, with whom we remained till the 19th of December. We then came, on St. Thomas’s Day, the 21st, to a small cottage at Town-End, Grasmere, which, in the course of a tour some months previously with Mr. Coleridge, I had been pleased with, and had hired. This we furnished for about a hundred pounds, which sum had come to my sister by a legacy from her uncle Crackanthorp.

I fell to composition immediately, and published, in 1800, the second volume of the ‘Lyrical Ballads.’

In the year 1802 I married Mary Hutchinson, at Brompton,

near Scarborough, to which part of the country the family had removed from Sockburn. We had known each other from childhood, and had practised reading and spelling under the same old dame at Penrith, a remarkable personage, who had taught three generations, of the upper classes principally, of the town of Penrith and its neighbourhood.

After our marriage we dwelt, together with our sister, at Town-End, where three of our children were born. In the spring of 1808, the increase of our family caused us to remove to a larger house, then just built, Allan Bank, in the same vale ; where our two younger children were born, and who died at the rectory, the house we afterwards occupied for two years. They died in 1812, and in 1813 we came to Rydal Mount, where we have since lived with no further sorrow till 1836, when my sister became a confirmed invalid, and our sister Sarah Hutchinson died. She lived alternately with her brother and with us.*

2. His Schoolmistress, Mrs. Anne Birkett, Penrith.

‘The old dame did not affect to make theologians, or logicians, but she taught to read, and she practised the memory, often no doubt by rote ; but still the faculty was improved. Something perhaps she explained, and left the rest to parents, to masters, and to the pastor of the parish.’†

3. Books and Reading.

‘Do not trouble yourself with reading modern authors at present ; confine your attention to ancient classical writers ; make yourself master of them ; and when you have done that, you will come down to us ; and then you will be able to judge us according to our deserts.’‡

4. Tour on the Continent, 1790.

LETTER TO MISS WORDSWORTH, SEPT. 6, 1790.

Sept. 6, 1790, Keswill (a small village on the Lake of Constance).

MY DEAR SISTER,

My last letter was addressed to you from St. Valier and the Grande Chartreuse. I have, since that period, gone over a very

* *Memoirs*, i. pp. 7-17.

† Letter to Rev. H. J. Rose (1828), *Memoirs*, i. 33.

‡ Letter to a nephew, *Memoirs*, i. 48-9.

considerable tract of country, and I will give you a sketch of my route as far as relates to mentioning places where I have been, after I have assured you that I am in excellent health and spirits, and have had no reason to complain of the contrary during our whole tour. My spirits have been kept in a perpetual hurry of delight, by the almost uninterrupted succession of sublime and beautiful objects which have passed before my eyes during the course of the last month. I will endeavour to give you some idea of our route. It will be utterly impossible for me to dwell upon particular scenes, as my paper would be exhausted before I had done with the journey of two or three days. On quitting the Grande Chartreuse, where we remained two days, contemplating, with increased pleasure, its wonderful scenery, we passed through Savoy to Geneva ; thence, along the Pays de Vaud side of the lake, to Villeneuve, a small town seated at its head. The lower part of the lake did not afford us a pleasure equal to what might have been expected from its celebrity ; this owing partly to its width, and partly to the weather, which was one of those hot gleamy days in which all distant objects are veiled in a species of bright obscurity. But the higher part of the lake made us ample amends : 'tis true we had some disagreeable weather, but the banks of the water are infinitely more picturesque, and, as it is much narrower, the landscape suffered proportionally less from that pale steam which before almost entirely hid the opposite shore. From Villeneuve we proceeded up the Rhone to Martigny, where we left our bundles, and struck over the mountains to Chamouny, and visited the glaciers of Savoy. You have undoubtedly heard of these celebrated scenes, but if you have not read about them, any description which I have room to give you must be altogether inadequate. After passing two days in the environs of Chamouny, we returned to Martigny, and pursued our mount up the Valais, along the Rhine, to Brig. At Brig we quitted the Valais, and passed the Alps at the Simplon, in order to visit part of Italy. The impressions of three hours of our walk among these Alps will never be effaced. From Duomo d'Ossola, a town of Italy which lay in our route, we proceeded to the lake of Locarno, to visit the Böromean Islands, and thence to Como. A more charming path was scarcely ever travelled over. The banks of many of the Italian and Swiss lakes are so steep and rocky as not to admit of roads ; that of Como is

partly of this character. A small foot-path is all the communication by land between one village and another, on the side along which we passed, for upwards of thirty miles. We entered upon this path about noon, and, owing to the steepness of the banks, were soon unmolested by the sun, which illuminated the woods, rocks, and villages of the opposite shore. The lake is narrow, and the shadows of the mountains were early thrown across it. It was beautiful to watch them travelling up the side of the hills,—for several hours to remark one half of a village covered with shade, and the other bright with the strongest sunshine. It was with regret that we passed every turn of this charming path, where every new picture was purchased by the loss of another which we should never have been tired of gazing upon. The shores of the lake consist of steeps covered with large, sweeping woods of chestnut, spotted with villages; some clinging from the summits of the advancing rocks, and others hiding themselves within their recesses. Nor was the surface of the lake less interesting than its shores; half of it glowing with the richest green and gold, the reflection of the illuminated wood and path, shaded with a soft blue tint. The picture was still further diversified by the number of sails which stole lazily by us as we paused in the wood above them. After all this we had the moon. It was impossible not to contrast that repose, that complacency of spirit, produced by these lovely scenes, with the sensations I had experienced two or three days before, in passing the Alps. At the lake of Como, my mind ran through a thousand dreams of happiness, which might be enjoyed upon its banks, if heightened by conversation and the exercise of the social affections. Among the more awful scenes of the Alps, I had not a thought of man, or a single created being; my whole soul was turned to Him who produced the terrible majesty before me. But I am too particular for the limits of my paper.

We followed the lake of Como to its head, and thence proceeded to Chiavenna, where we began to pass a range of the Alps, which brought us into the country of the Grisons at Sovozza. From Sovozza we pursued the valley of Myssen, in which it is situated, to its head; passed Mount Adula to Hinter Rhine, a small village near one of the sources of the Rhine. We pursued this branch of the Rhine downward through the Grisons to Michenem, where we turned up the other branch of the same

river, and following it to Chiamut, a small village near its source. Here we quitted the Grisons, and entered Switzerland at the valley of Urseren, and pursued the course of the Reuss down to Altorf; thence we proceeded, partly upon the lake and partly behind the mountains on its banks, to Lucerne, and thence to Zurich. From Zurich, along the banks of the lake, we continued our route to Richtenschwyl: here we left the lake to visit the famous church and convent of Einsiedeln, and thence to Glaris. But this catalogue must be shockingly tedious. Suffice it to say, that, after passing a day in visiting the romantic valley of Glaris, we proceeded by the lake of Wallenstadt and the canton of Appenzell to the lake of Constance, where this letter was begun nine days ago. From Constance we proceeded along the banks of the Rhine to Schaffhausen, to view the falls of the Rhine there. Magnificent as this fall certainly is, I must confess I was disappointed in it. I had raised my ideas too high.

We followed the Rhine downward about eight leagues from Schaffhausen, where we crossed it, and proceeded by Baden to Lucerne. I am at this present moment (14th September) writing at a small village on the road from Grindelwald to Lauterbrunnen. By consulting your maps, you will find these villages in the south-east part of the canton of Berne, not far from the lakes of Thun and Brientz. After viewing the valley of Lauterbrunnen, we shall have concluded our tour of the more Alpine part of Switzerland. We proceed thence to Berne, and intend, after making two or three small excursions about the lake of Neufchatel, to go to Basle, a town in Switzerland, upon the Rhine, whence we shall, if we find we can afford it, take advantage of the river down to Cologne, and so cross to Ostend, where we shall take the packet to Margate. To-day is the 14th of September; and I hope we shall be in England by the 10th of October. I have had, during the course of this delightful tour, a great deal of uneasiness from an apprehension of your anxiety on my account. I have thought of you perpetually; and never have my eyes burst upon a scene of particular loveliness but I have almost instantly wished that you could for a moment be transported to the place where I stood to enjoy it. I have been more particularly induced to form those wishes, because the scenes of Switzerland have no resemblance to any I have found in England; consequently it may probably never be in your

power to form an idea of them. We are now, as I observed above, upon the point of quitting these most sublime and beautiful parts ; and you cannot imagine the melancholy regret which I feel at the idea. I am a perfect enthusiast in my admiration of nature in all her various forms ; and I have looked upon, and, as it were, conversed with, the objects which this country has presented to my view so long, and with such increasing pleasure, that the idea of parting from them oppresses me with a sadness similar to what I have always felt in quitting a beloved friend.

There is no reason to be surprised at the strong attachment which the Swiss have always shown to their native country. Much of it must undoubtedly have been owing to those charms which have already produced so powerful an effect upon me, and to which the rudest minds cannot possibly be indifferent. Ten thousand times in the course of this tour have I regretted the inability of my memory to retain a more strong impression of the beautiful forms before me ; and again and again, in quitting a fortunate station, have I returned to it with the most eager avidity, in the hope of bearing away a more lively picture. At this moment, when many of these landscapes are floating before my mind, I feel a high enjoyment in reflecting that perhaps scarcely a day of my life will pass in which I shall not derive some happiness from these images.

With regard to the manners of the inhabitants of this singular country, the impressions which we have had often occasion to receive have been unfavourable ; but it must be remembered that we have had little to do but with innkeepers, and those corrupted by perpetual intercourse with strangers. Had we been able to speak the language, which is German, and had we time to insinuate ourselves into their cottages, we should probably have had as much occasion to admire the simplicity of their lives as the beauties of their country. My partiality to Switzerland, excited by its natural charms, induces me to hope that the manners of the inhabitants are amiable ; but at the same time I cannot help frequently comparing them with those of the French, and, as far as I have had opportunity to observe, they lose very much by the comparison. We not only found the French a much less imposing people, but that politeness diffused through the lowest ranks had an air so engaging that you could scarce attribute it to any other cause than real benevolence.

During the time, which was near a month, that we were in France, we had not once to complain of the smallest deficiency in courtesy in any person, much less of any positive rudeness. We had also perpetual occasion to observe that cheerfulness and sprightliness for which the French have always been remarkable. But I must remind you that we crossed at the time when the whole nation was mad with joy in consequence of the Revolution. It was a most interesting period to be in France; and we had many delightful scenes, where the interest of the picture was owing solely to this cause. I was also much pleased with what I saw of the Italians during the short time we were among them. We had several times occasion to observe a softness and elegance which contrasted strongly with the severe austereness of their neighbours on the other side of the Alps. It was with pleasure I observed, at a small inn on the lake of Como, the master of it playing upon his harpsichord, with a large collection of Italian music about him. The outside of the instrument was such that it would not much have graced an English drawing-room; but the tones that he drew from it were by no means contemptible.

But it is time to talk about England. When you write to my brothers, I must beg of you to give my love, and tell them I am sorry it has not been in my power to write to them. Kit will be surprised he has not heard from me, as we were almost upon terms of regular correspondence. I had not heard from Richard for some time before I set out. I did not call upon him when I was in London; not so much because we were determined to hurry through London, but because he, as many of our friends at Cambridge did, would look upon our scheme as mad and impracticable. I expect great pleasure, on my return to Cambridge, in exulting over those of my friends who threatened us with such an accumulation of difficulties as must undoubtedly render it impossible for us to perform the tour. Every thing, however, has succeeded with us far beyond my most sanguine expectations. We have, it is true, met with little disasters occasionally, but far from distressing, and they rather gave us additional resolution and spirits. We have both enjoyed most excellent health; and we have been so inured to walking, that we are become almost insensible to fatigue. We have several times performed a journey of thirteen leagues over the

most mountainous parts of Switzerland without any more weariness than if we had been walking an hour in the groves of Cambridge. Our appearance is singular; and we have often observed, that, in passing through a village, we have excited a general smile. Our coats, which we had made light on purpose for the journey, are of the same piece; and our manner of carrying our bundles, which is upon our heads, with each an oak stick in our hands, contributes not a little to that general curiosity which we seem to excite. But I find I have again relapsed into egotism, and must here entreat you, not only to pardon this fault, but also to make allowance for the illegible hand and desultory style of this letter. It has been written, as you will see by its different shades, at many sittings, and is, in fact, the produce of most of the leisure which I have had since it was begun, and is now finally drawing to a conclusion, it being on the 16th of September. I flatter myself still with the hope of seeing you for a fortnight or three weeks, if it be agreeable to my uncle, as there will be no necessity for me to be in Cambridge before the 10th of November. I shall be better able to judge whether I am likely to enjoy this pleasure in about three weeks. I shall probably write to you again before I quit France; if not, most certainly immediately on my landing in England. You will remember me affectionately to my uncle and aunt: as he was acquainted with my giving up all thoughts of a fellowship, he may, perhaps, not be so much displeased at this journey. I should be sorry if I have offended him by it. I hope my little cousin is well. I must now bid you adieu, with assuring you that you are perpetually in my thoughts, and that

I remain,

Most affectionately yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.

On looking over this letter, I am afraid you will not be able to read half of it. I must again beg you to excuse me.

Miss Wordsworth, Rev. Wm. Cookson's,
Long Stretton, Norfolk, L'Angleterre.*

* *Memoirs*, pp. 57-66.

5. *In Wales.*

‘ You will see by the date of this letter that I am in Wales, and whether you remember the place of Jones’s residence or no, you will immediately conclude that I am with him. I quitted London about three weeks ago, where my time passed in a strange manner, sometimes whirled about by the vortex of its *strenua inertia*, and sometimes thrown by the eddy into a corner of the stream. Think not, however, that I had not many pleasant hours. . . . My time has been spent since I reached Wales in a very agreeable manner, and Jones and I intend to make a tour through its northern counties,—on foot, as you will easily suppose.’*

6. *Melancholy of a Friend.*

‘ I regret much not to have been made acquainted with your wish to have employed your vacation in a pedestrian tour, both on your account, as it would have contributed greatly to exhilarate your spirits, and on mine, as we should have gained much from the addition of your society. Such an excursion would have served like an Aurora Borealis to gild your long Lapland night of melancholy.’†

7. *Holy Orders.*

About this time Wordsworth was urged by some of his relatives to take holy orders. Writing from Cambridge, September 23rd, to Mathews, he says: ‘ I quitted Wales on a summons from Mr. Robinson, a gentleman you most likely have heard me speak of, respecting my going into orders and taking a curacy at Harwich; which curacy he considered as introductory to the living. I thought it was best to pay my respects to him in person, to inform him that I am not of age for ordination.’‡

8. *The French Revolution: 1792.*

‘ The horrors excited by the relation of the events consequent upon the commencement of hostilities is general. Not but that there are some men who felt a gloomy satisfaction from a measure which seemed to put the patriot army out of a possibility of success. An ignominious flight, the massacre of their general,

* Letter to William Mathews, *Memoirs*, i. 70.

† Ibid. *Memoirs*, i. 71.

‡ *Memoirs*, i. 71.

a dance performed with savage joy round his burning body, the murder of six prisoners, are events which would have arrested the attention of the reader of the annals of Morocco.'

He then expresses his fear that the patriot army would be routed by the invaders. But 'suppose,' he adds, 'that the German army is at the gates of Paris, what will be the consequence? It will be impossible for it to make any material alterations in the constitution; impossible to reinstate the clergy in its ancient guilty splendour; impossible to restore an existence to the noblesse similar to that it before enjoyed; impossible to add much to the authority of the king. Yet there are in France some (millions?)—I speak without exaggeration—who expect that this will take place.'*

9. Failure of Louvet's Denunciation of Robespierre.

At Paris his feelings were still more disturbed by the abortive issue of Louvet's denunciation of Robespierre: he began to forebode the commencement of the Reign of Terror; he was paralysed with sorrow and dismay, and stung with disappointment, that no paramount spirit had emerged to abash the impious crests of the leaders of 'the atheist crew,' and 'to quell outrage and bloody power,' and to 'clear a passage for just government, and leave a solid birthright to the state.'†

10. Of inflammatory Political Opinions.

'I disapprove of monarchical and aristocratical governments, however modified. Hereditary distinctions, and privileged orders of every species, I think, must necessarily counteract the progress of human improvement. Hence it follows, that I am not among the admirers of the British constitution. I conceive that a more excellent system of civil policy might be established among us; yet in my ardour to attain the goal, I do not forget the nature of the ground where the race is to be run. The destruction of those institutions which I condemn appears to me to be hastening on too rapidly. I recoil from the very idea of a revolution. I am a determined enemy to every species of violence. I see no connection, but what the obstinacy of pride and ignorance renders necessary, between justice and the sword,—

* Extract of letter to Mathews, May 17, 1792, *Memoirs*, i. 75.

† *Memoirs*, i. 76.

between reason and bonds. I deplore the miserable condition of the French, and think that we can only be guarded from the same scourge by the undaunted efforts of good men. . . . I severely condemn all inflammatory addresses to the passions of men. I know that the multitude walk in darkness. I would put into each man's hands a lantern, to guide him; and not have him to set out upon his journey depending for illumination on abortive flashes of lightning, or the coruscations of transitory meteors.*

11. *At Milkhouse, Halifax*: ‘Not to take orders.’

‘My sister,’ he says, in a letter to Mathews (February 17th, 1794), ‘is under the same roof with me; indeed it was to see her that I came into this country. I have been doing nothing, and still continue to do nothing. What is to become of me I know not.’ He announces his resolve *not* to take orders; and ‘as for the Law, I have neither strength of mind, purse, or constitution, to engage in that pursuit.’†

12. *Literary Work: Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches*:
1794.

In May, 1794, William Wordsworth was at Whitehaven, at his uncle's, Mr. Richard Wordsworth's; and he then proposes to his friend Mathews, who was resident in London, that they should set on foot a monthly political and literary Miscellany, to which, he says, ‘he would communicate critical remarks on poetry, the arts of painting, gardening, &c., besides essays on morals and politics.’ ‘I am at present,’ he adds, ‘nearly at leisure—I say *nearly*, for I am *not quite* so, as I am correcting, and considerably adding to, those poems which I published in your absence’ (*The Evening Walk* and *Descriptive Sketches*). ‘It was with great reluctance that I sent those two little works into the world in so imperfect a state. But as I had done nothing by which to distinguish myself at the university, I thought these little things might show that I *could* do something. They have been treated with unmerited contempt by some of the periodicals, and others have spoken in higher terms of them than they deserve.’‡

* Extract of letter to Mathews, *Memoirs*, i. 79-80.

† *Memoirs*, i. 82.

‡ *Ibid.* i. 82-3.

13. Employment on a London Newspaper.

Writing from Keswick on November 7th, 1794, he announces to his friend Mathews, who was employed on the newspapers, his desire and intention of coming to London for the same purpose, and requests him to procure for him a similar engagement. ‘ You say a newspaper would be glad of me. Do you think you could ensure me employment in that way, on terms similar to your own ? I mean, also, in an Opposition paper, for I cannot abet, in the smallest degree, the measures pursued by the present ministry. They are already so deeply advanced in iniquity, that, like Macbeth, they cannot retreat. When I express myself in this manner, I am far from reprobating those whose sentiments differ from my own ; I know that many good men are persuaded of the expediency of the present war.’ He then turns to domestic matters : ‘ You would probably see that my brother [afterwards the Master of Trinity] has been honoured with two college declamation prizes. This goes towards a fellowship, which I hope he will obtain, and am sure he will merit. He is a lad of talents, and industrious withal. This same industry is a good old Roman quality, and nothing is to be done without it.’*

14. Raisley Calvert’s last Illness.

‘ My friend’ [Calvert] ‘ has every symptom of a confirmed consumption, and I cannot think of quitting him in his present debilitated state.’† Again : ‘ I have been here [Mr. Somerby’s, at the sign of the Robin Hood, Penrith] for some time. I am still much engaged with my sick friend ; and sorry am I to add that he worsens daily . . . he is barely alive.’‡

15. Family History.

LETTER TO SIR GEORGE H. BEAUMONT, BART.

Grasmere, Feb. 20, 1805.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

My father, who was an attorney of considerable eminence, died intestate when we were children ; and the chief part of his personal property after his decease was expended in an

* *Memoirs*, i. 85. † Letter to Mathews, Nov. 9, 1794. ‡ *Memoirs*, i. 85-6.

unsuccessful attempt to compel the late Lord Lonsdale to pay a debt of about 5000*l.* to my father's estate. Enough, however, was scraped together to educate us all in different ways. I, the second son, was sent to college with a view to the profession of the church or law; into one of which I should have been forced by necessity, had not a friend left me 900*l.* This bequest was from a young man with whom, though I call him friend, I had had but little connection; and the act was done entirely from a confidence on his part that I had powers and attainments which might be of use to mankind. This I have mentioned, because it was his due, and I thought the fact would give you pleasure. Upon the interest of the 900*l.*, 400*l.* being laid out in annuity, with 200*l.* deducted from the principal, and 100*l.* a legacy to my sister, and a 100*l.* more which the 'Lyrical Ballads' have brought me, my sister and I contrived to live seven years, nearly eight. Lord Lonsdale then died, and the present Lord Lowther paid to my father's estate 8500*l.* Of this sum I believe 1800*l.* apiece will come to my sister and myself; at least, would have come: but 3000*l.* was lent out to our poor brother,* I mean taken from the whole sum, which was about 1200*l.* more than his share, which 1200*l.* belonged to my sister and me. This 1200*l.* we freely lent him; whether it was insured or no, I do not know; but I dare say it will prove to be the case; we did not, however, stipulate for its being insured. But you shall faithfully know all particulars as soon as I have learned them.†

16. *Reading*: 1795.

Here [Racedown Lodge, near Crewkerne, Dorsetshire] he and his sister employed themselves industriously in reading—'if reading can ever deserve the name of industry,' says Wordsworth in a letter to his friend Mathews of March 21, 1796.‡

17. *Satire: Poetical Imitations of Juvenal*: 1795.

LETTER TO WRANGHAM.

Nov. 7. 1806.

'I have long since come to a fixed resolution to steer clear of personal satire; in fact, I never will have anything to do with

* Captain John Wordsworth, who perished by shipwreck a short time before the date of this letter. † *Memoirs*, i. 88-9. ‡ *Ibid.* i. 94.

it as far as concerns the *private* vices of individuals on any account. With respect to public delinquents or offenders, I will not say the same; though I should be slow to meddle even with these. This is a rule which I have laid down for myself, and shall rigidly adhere to; though I do not in all cases blame those who think and act differently.

'It will therefore follow, that I cannot lend any assistance to your proposed publication. The verses which you have of mine I should wish to be destroyed; I have no copy of them myself, at least none that I can find. I would most willingly give them up to you, fame, profit, and everything, if I thought either true fame or profit could arise out of them.*'

18. *Visit to Thelwall.*

'Mr. Coleridge, my sister, and I had been visiting the famous John Thelwall, who had taken refuge from politics after a trial for high treason, with a view to bring up his family by the profits of agriculture, which proved as unfortunate a speculation as that he had fled from. Coleridge and he had been public lecturers, Coleridge mingling with his politics theology, from which the other elocutionist abstained, unless it were for the sake of a sneer. This quondam community of public employment induced Thelwall to visit Coleridge, at Nether-Stowey, where he fell in my way. He really was a man of extraordinary talent, an affectionate husband, and a good father. Though brought up in the City, on a tailor's board, he was truly sensible of the beauty of natural objects. I remember once, when Coleridge, he, and I were seated upon the turf on the brink of the stream, in the most beautiful part of the most beautiful glen of Alfoxden, Coleridge exclaimed, "This is a place to reconcile one to all the jarrings and conflicts of the wide world." "Nay," said Thelwall, "to make one forget them altogether." The visit of this man to Coleridge was, as I believe Coleridge has related, the occasion of a spy being sent by Government to watch our proceedings, which were, I can say with truth, such as the world at large would have thought ludicrously harmless.'†

* *Memoirs*, i. 95-6.

† *Ibid.* i. 104-5.

19. *Poetry added to: April 12th, 1798.*

‘ You will be pleased to hear that I have gone on very rapidly adding to my stock of poetry. Do come and let me read it to you under the old trees in the park [at Alfoxden]. We have little more than two months to stay in this place.’*

20. *On the Wye.*

‘ We left Alfoxden on Monday morning, the 26th of June, stayed with Coleridge till the Monday following, then set forth on foot towards Bristol. We were at Cottle’s for a week, and thence we went towards the banks of the Wye. We crossed the Severn Ferry, and walked ten miles further to Tintern Abbey, a very beautiful ruin on the Wye. The next morning we walked along the river through Monmouth to Goderich Castle, there slept, and returned the next day to Tintern, thence to Chepstow, and from Chepstow back again in a boat to Tintern, where we slept, and thence back in a small vessel to Bristol.

‘ The Wye is a stately and majestic river from its width and depth, but never slow and sluggish ; you can always hear its murmur. It travels through a woody country, now varied with cottages and green meadows, and now with huge and fantastic rocks.’†

21. *At Home again.*

‘ We are now’ (he says in a letter to Cottle) ‘ in the county of Durham, just upon the borders of Yorkshire. We left Coleridge well at Göttingen a month ago. We have spent our time pleasantly enough in Germany, but we are right glad to find ourselves in England—for we have learnt to know its value.’‡

22. *Early Visit to the Lake District.*

On September 2nd [1799] Wordsworth writes from Sockburn to his friend Cottle : ‘ If you come down . . . I will accompany you on your tour. You will come by Greta Bridge, which is about twenty miles from this place : thither Dorothy and I will go to meet you. . . . Dorothy will return to Sockburn, and I will accompany you into Cumberland and Westmoreland.’§

* Letter to Cottle, *Memoirs*, i. 116.

† Ibid. i. 116-17.

‡ 1799 : *Memoirs*, i. 145.

§ Ibid. i. 147.

23. *On a Tour, 1799.*

' We left Cottle, as you know, at Greta Bridge. We were obliged to take the mail over Stanemoor : the road interesting with sun and mist. At Temple Sowerby I learned that John was at Newbiggin. I sent a note ; he came, looks very well, said he would accompany us a few days. Next day we set off and dined at Mr. Myers', thence to Bampton, where we slept. On Friday proceeded along the lake of Hawes-Water, a noble scene which pleased us much. The mists hung so low that we could not go directly over to Ambleside, so we went round by Long Sleddale to Kentmere, Troutbeck, Rayrigg, and Bowness; . . . a rainy and raw day. . . . Went to the ferry, much disgusted with the new erections about Windermere; . . . thence to Hawkshead : great change among the people since we were last there. Next day by Rydal to Grasmere, Robert Newton's. At Robert Newton's we have remained till to-day. John left us on Tuesday: we walked with him to the tarn. This day was a fine one, and we had some grand mountain scenery ; the rest of the week has been bad weather. The evening before last we walked to the upper waterfall at Rydal, and saw it through the gloom, and it was very magnificent. Coleridge was much struck with Grasmere and its neighbourhood. I have much to say to you. You will think my plan a mad one, but I have thought of building a house there by the lake-side. John would give me 40*l.* to buy the ground. There is a small house at Grasmere empty, which, perhaps, we may take ; but of this we will speak.*'

24. *At the Lakes.*LETTER TO COLERIDGE (1799): JOURNEY FROM SOCKBURN
TO GRASMERE.

' We arrived here on the evening of St. Thomas's day, last Friday [1799], and have now been four days in our new abode without writing to you—a long time ! but we have been in such confusion as not to have had a moment's leisure. My dear friend, we talk of you perpetually, and for me I see you every where. But let me be a little more methodical. We left Sockburn last Tuesday morning. We crossed the Tees by moon-

* *Memoirs*, i. 148-9.

light in the Sockburn fields, and after ten good miles' riding came in sight of the Swale. It is there a beautiful river, with its green bank and flat holms scattered over with trees. Four miles further brought us to Richmond, with its huge ivied castle, its friarage steeple, its castle tower resembling a huge steeple, and two other steeple towers, for such they appeared to us. The situation of this place resembles that of Barnard Castle, but I should suppose is somewhat inferior to it. George accompanied us eight miles further, and there we parted with sorrowful hearts. We were now in Wensley Dale, and D [orothy] and I set off side by side to foot it as far as Kendal. I will not clog my letter with a description of this celebrated dale; but I must not neglect to mention that a little before sunset we reached one of the waterfalls, of which I read you a short description in Mr. Taylor's tour. It is a singular scene; I meant to have given you some account of it, but I feel myself too lazy to execute the task. 'Tis such a performance as you might have expected from some giant gardener employed by one of Queen Elizabeth's courtiers, if this same giant gardener had consulted with Spenser, and they two had finished the work together. By this you will understand that it is at once formal and wild. We reached Askrigg, twelve miles, before six in the evening, having been obliged to walk the last two miles over hard frozen roads, to the great annoyance of our ankles and feet. Next morning the earth was thinly covered with snow, enough to make the road soft, and prevent its being slippery. On leaving Askrigg, we turned aside to see another waterfall. It was a beautiful morning, with driving snow showers, which disappeared by fits, and unveiled the east, which was all one delicious pale orange colour. After walking through two small fields we came to a mill, which we passed; and in a moment a sweet little valley opened before us, with an area of grassy ground, and a stream dashing over various laminæ of black rocks close under a bank covered with firs; the bank and stream on our left, another woody bank on our right, and the flat meadow in front, from which, as at Buttermere, the stream had retired, as it were, to hide itself under the shade. As we walked up this delightful valley we were tempted to look back perpetually on the stream, which reflected the orange lights of the morning among the gloomy rocks, with a brightness varying with the agitation of the current. The

steeple of Askriгг was between us and the east, at the bottom of the valley ; it was not a quarter of a mile distant, but oh ! how far we were from it ! The two banks seemed to join before us with a facing of rock common to them both. When we reached this bottom the valley opened out again ; two rocky banks on each side, which, hung with ivy and moss, and fringed luxuriantly with brushwood, ran directly parallel to each other, and then approaching with a gentle curve at their point of union, presented a lofty waterfall, the termination of the valley. It was a keen frosty morning, showers of snow threatening us, but the sun bright and active. We had a task of twenty-one miles to perform in a short winter's day. All this put our minds into such a state of excitation, that we were no unworthy spectators of this delightful scene. On a nearer approach the waters seemed to fall down a tall arch, or niche, that had shaped itself by insensible moulderings in the wall of an old castle. We left this spot with reluctance, but highly exhilarated. When we had walked about a mile and a half, we overtook two men with a string of ponies and some empty carts. I recommended to Dorothy to avail herself of this opportunity of husbanding her strength : we rode with them more than two miles. 'Twas bitter cold, the wind driving the snow behind us in the best style of a mountain storm. We soon reached an inn at a place called Hardrane, and descending from our vehicles, after warming ourselves by the cottage fire, we walked up the brook-side to take a view of a third waterfall. We had not walked above a few hundred yards between two winding rocky banks, before we came full upon the waterfall, which seemed to throw itself in a narrow line from a lofty wall of rock, the water, which shot manifestly to some distance from the rock, seeming to be dispersed into a thin shower scarcely visible before it reached the basin. We were disappointed in the cascade itself, though the introductory and accompanying banks were an exquisite mixture of grandeur and beauty. We walked up to the fall ; and what would I not give if I could convey to you the feelings and images which were then communicated to me ? After cautiously sounding our way over stones of all colours and sizes, encased in the clearest water formed by the spray of the fall, we found the rock, which before had appeared like a wall, extending itself over our heads, like the ceiling of a huge cave, from the summit of which the waters

shot directly over our heads into a basin, and among fragments wrinkled over with masses of ice as white as snow, or rather, as Dorothy says, like congealed froth. The water fell at least ten yards from us, and we stood directly behind it, the excavation not so deep in the rock as to impress any feeling of darkness, but lofty and magnificent; but in connection with the adjoining banks excluding as much of the sky as could well be spared from a scene so exquisitely beautiful. The spot where we stood was as dry as the chamber in which I am now sitting, and the incumbent rock, of which the groundwork was limestone, veined and dappled with colours which melted into each other with every possible variety of colour. On the summit of the cave were three festoons, or rather wrinkles, in the rock, run up parallel like the folds of a curtain when it is drawn up. Each of these was hung with icicles of various length, and nearly in the middle of the festoon in the deepest valley of the waves that ran parallel to each other, the stream shot from the rows of icicles in irregular fits of strength, and with a body of water that varied every moment. Sometimes the stream shot into the basin in one continued current; sometimes it was interrupted almost in the midst of its fall, and was blown towards part of the waterfall at no great distance from our feet like the heaviest thunder-shower. In such a situation you have at every moment a feeling of the presence of the sky. Large fleecy clouds drove over our heads above the rush of the water, and the sky appeared of a blue more than usually brilliant. The rocks on each side, which, joining with the side of this cave, formed the vista of the brook, were chequered with three diminutive waterfalls, or rather courses of water. Each of these was a miniature of all that summer and winter can produce of delicate beauty. The rock in the centre of the falls, where the water was most abundant, a deep black, the adjoining parts yellow, white, purple, and dove-colour, covered with water-plants of the most vivid green, and hung with streaming icicles, that in some places seem to conceal the verdure of the plants, and the violet and yellow variegation of the rocks; and in some places render the colours more brilliant. I cannot express to you the enchanting effect produced by this Arabian scene of colour as the wind blew aside the great waterfall behind which we stood, and alternately hid and revealed each of these fairy cataracts in irregular succession, or displayed

them with various gradations of distinctness as the intervening spray was thickened or dispersed. What a scene, too, in summer! In the luxury of our imagination we could not help feeding upon the pleasure which this cave, in the heat of a July noon, would spread through a frame exquisitely sensible. That huge rock on the right, the bank winding round on the left, with all its living foliage, and the breeze stealing up the valley, and bedewing the cavern with the freshest imaginable spray. And then the murmur of the water, the quiet, the seclusion, and a long summer day.*

25. *Inconsistent Opinions on his Poems.*

'HARMONIES OF CRITICISM.'

'Nutting.'

Mr. C. W.:

'Worth its weight in gold.'

'Nutting.'

Mr. S.:

'Can make neither head nor tail of it.'

'Joanna.'

Mr. J. W.:

'The finest poem of its length you have written.'

'Joanna.'

Mr. S.:

'Can make nothing of it.'

'Poet's Epitaph.'

Mr. Charles Lamb:

'The latter part preëminently good, and your own.'

'Poet's Epitaph.'

Mr. S.:

'The latter part very ill written.'

'Cumberland Beggar.'

Mr. J. W.:

'Everybody seems delighted.'

'Cumberland Beggar.'

Mr. Charles Lamb:

'You seem to presume your readers are stupid: the instructions too direct.'

'Idiot Boy.'

Mr. J. W.:

'A lady, a friend of mine, could talk of nothing else: this, of all the poems, her delight.'

'Idiot Boy.'

Mr. S.:

'Almost thrown by it into a fit with disgust; *cannot read it!*'

But here comes the waggon.

W. W.†

* *Memoirs*, i. 149-54.

† Note to Coleridge, *Memoirs*, i. 174-5.

26. *On his Scottish Tour.*

TO SCOTT.

Grasmere, Oct. 16. 1803.

‘ We had a delightful journey home, delightful weather, and a sweet country to travel through. We reached our little cottage in high spirits, and thankful to God for all His bounties. My wife and child were both well, and, as I need not say, we had all of us a happy meeting. . . . We passed Branxholme (your Branxholme, we supposed) about four miles on this side of Hawick. It looks better in your poem than in its present realities. The situation, however, is delightful, and makes amends for an ordinary mansion. The whole of the Teviot, and the pastoral steeps about Mossopaul, pleased us exceedingly. The Esk, below Lañgholm, is a delicious river, and we saw it to great advantage. We did not omit noticing Johnnie Armstrong’s Keep ; but his hanging-place, to our great regret, we missed. We were, indeed, most truly sorry that we could not have you along with us into Westmoreland. The country was in its full glory ; the verdure of the valleys, in which we are so much superior to you in Scotland, but little tarnished by the weather ; and the trees putting on their most beautiful looks. My sister was quite enchanted ; and we often said to each other, “ What a pity Mr. Scott is not with us ! ” . . . I had the pleasure of seeing Coleridge and Southey at Keswick last Sunday. Southey, whom I never saw much of before, I liked much : he is very pleasant in his manner, and a man of great reading in old books, poetry, chronicles, memoirs, &c., particularly Spanish and Portuguese. . . . My sister and I often talk of the happy days that we spent in your company. Such things do not occur often in life. If we live, we shall meet again ; that is my consolation when I think of these things. Scotland and England sound like division, do what we can ; but we really are but neighbours, and if you were no further off, and in Yorkshire, we should think so. Farewell ! God prosper you, and all that belongs to you ! Your sincere friend, for such I will call myself, though slow to use a word of such solemn meaning to any one,

‘ W. WORDSWORTH.*

* *Life of Scott*, by Lockhart, vol. ii. 165-7 (1856). The following from the same source, earlier, may fitly find a place here : ‘ It was in the September of

27. *The Grove : Captain John Wordsworth.*

John Wordsworth left Grasmere on Michaelmas-day, 1800, walking over by Grisedale Tarn to Paterdale, whence he would proceed to Penrith ; he took leave of his brother William, near the Tarn, where Ullswater first comes in view ; and he went to sea again, in the Abergavenny East-Indiaman, in the spring of 1801.

After his departure from Grasmere, the Poet discovered a track which had been worn by his brother's steps 'pacing there unwearied and alone,' during the winter weather, in a sheltering fir-grove above the cottage, and henceforth *that* fir-grove was known to the Poet's household by the name of 'John's Grove,' or 'Brother's Grove.' Of this Wordsworth writes :

'When to the attractions of the busy world,' 1805.—'The grove still exists, but the plantation has been walled in, and is not so accessible as when my brother John wore the path in the manner described. The grove was a favourite haunt with us all while we lived at Town-End.*

28. *Spenser and Milton.*

Captain Wordsworth returned from the voyage on which he sailed in 1801 ; and in November 1802, he writes for directions what books to buy to carry with him on a voyage of sixteen months. . . .

this year [1803] that Scott first saw Wordsworth. Their common acquaintance, Stoddart, had so often talked of them to each other, that they met as if they had not been strangers ; and they parted friends. Mr. and Miss Wordsworth had just completed that tour in the Highlands of which so many incidents have since been immortalised, both in the poet's sense and in the hardly less poetical prose of his sister's Diary. On the morning of the 17th of September, having left their carriage at Rosslyn, they walked down the valley to Lasswade, and arrived there before Mr. and Mrs. Scott had risen. "We were received," Mr. Wordsworth has told me, "with that frank cordiality which, under whatever circumstances I afterwards met him, always marked his manners ; and, indeed, I found him then in every respect—except perhaps that his animal spirits were somewhat higher—precisely the same man that you knew him in later life ; the same lively, entertaining conversation, full of anecdote, and averse from disquisition ; the same unaffected modesty about himself ; the same cheerful and benevolent and hopeful views of man and the world. He partly read and partly recited, sometimes in an enthusiastic style of chant, the first four cantos of the "Lay of the Last Minstrel;" and the novelty of the manners, the clear picturesque descriptions, and the easy glowing energy of much of the verse, greatly delighted me' (pp. 160-1).

* *Memoirs*, i. 282.

‘Tell John’ says Wordsworth, ‘when he buys Spenser, to purchase an edition which has his “State of Ireland” in it. This is in prose. This edition may be scarce, but one surely can be found.

‘Milton’s Sonnets (transcribe all this for John, as said by me to him) I think manly and dignified compositions, distinguished by simplicity and unity of object and aim, and undisfigured by false or vicious ornaments. They are in several places incorrect, and sometimes uncouth in language, and, perhaps, in some, inharmonious; yet, upon the whole, I think the music exceedingly well suited to its end, that is, it has an energetic and varied flow of sound crowding into narrow room more of the combined effect of rhyme and blank verse than can be done by any other kind of verse I know. The Sonnets of Milton which I like best are that to *Cyriack Skinner*; on his *Blindness*; *Captain or Colonel*; *Massacre of Piedmont*; *Cromwell*, except two last lines; *Fairfax*, &c.*’

29. *Death of Captain John Wordsworth.*

LETTER TO SIR GEORGE H. BEAUMONT, BART.

Grasmere, Feb. 11. 1805.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The public papers will already have broken the shock which the sight of this letter will give you: you will have learned by them the loss of the Earl of Abergavenny East-Indiaman, and, along with her, of a great proportion of the crew,—that of her captain, our brother, and a most beloved brother he was. This calamitous news we received at 2 o’clock to-day, and I write to you from a house of mourning. My poor sister, and my wife who loved him almost as we did (for he was one of the most amiable of men), are in miserable affliction, which I do all in my power to alleviate; but Heaven knows I want consolation myself. I can say nothing higher of my ever-dear brother, than that he was worthy of his sister, who is now weeping beside me, and of the friendship of Coleridge; meek, affectionate, silently enthusiastic, loving all quiet things, and a poet in every thing but words.

Alas! what is human life! This present moment, I thought,

* *Memoirs*, i. 287.

this morning, would have been devoted to the pleasing employment of writing a letter to amuse you in your confinement. I had singled out several little fragments (descriptions merely), which I purposed to have transcribed from my poems, thinking that the perusal of them might give you a few minutes' gratification ; and now I am called to this melancholy office.

I shall never forget your goodness in writing so long and interesting a letter to me under such circumstances. This letter also arrived by the same post which brought the unhappy tidings of my brother's death, so that they were both put into my hands at the same moment. . . .

Your affectionate friend,

W. WORDSWORTH.

I shall do all in my power to sustain my sister under her sorrow, which is, and long will be, bitter and poignant. We did not love him as a brother merely, but as a man of original mind, and an honour to all about him. Oh ! dear friend, forgive me for talking thus. We have had no tidings of Coleridge. I tremble for the moment when he is to hear of my brother's death ; it will distress him to the heart,—and his poor body cannot bear sorrow. He loved my brother, and he knows how we at Grasmere loved him.

Nine days afterwards, Wordsworth resumed the subject as follows :

Grasmere, Feb. 20. 1805.

Having spoken of worldly affairs, let me again mention my beloved brother. It is now just five years since, after a separation of fourteen years (I may call it a separation, for we only saw him four or five times, and by glimpses), he came to visit his sister and me in this cottage, and passed eight blessed months with us. He was then waiting for the command of the ship to which he was appointed when he quitted us. As you will have seen, we had little to live upon, and he as little (Lord Lonsdale being then alive). But he encouraged me to persist, and to keep my eye steady on its object. He would work for me (that was his language), for me and his sister ; and I was to endeavour to do something for the world. He went to sea, as commander, with this hope ; his voyage was very unsuccess-

ful, he having lost by it considerably. When he came home, we chanced to be in London, and saw him. ‘Oh!’ said he, ‘I have thought of you, and nothing but you; if ever of myself, and my bad success, it was only on your account.’ He went again to sea a second time, and also was unsuccessful; still with the same hopes on our account, though then not so necessary, Lord Lowther having paid the money.* Lastly came the lamentable voyage, which he entered upon, full of expectation, and love to his sister and myself, and my wife, whom, indeed, he loved with all a brother’s tenderness. This is the end of his part of the agreement—of his efforts for my welfare! God grant me life and strength to fulfil mine! I shall never forget him,—never lose sight of him: there is a bond between us yet, the same as if he were living, nay, far more sacred, calling upon me to do my utmost, as he to the last did his utmost to live in honour and worthiness. Some of the newspapers carelessly asserted that he did not wish to survive his ship. This is false. He was heard by one of the surviving officers giving orders, with all possible calmness, a very little before the ship went down; and when he could remain at his post no longer, then, and not till then, he attempted to save himself. I knew this would be so, but it was satisfactory for me to have it confirmed by external evidence. Do not think our grief unreasonable. Of all human beings whom I ever knew, he was the man of the most rational desires, the most sedate habits, and the most perfect self-command. He was modest and gentle, and shy even to disease; but this was wearing off. In every thing his judgments were sound and original; his taste in all the arts, music and poetry in particular (for these he, of course, had had the best opportunities of being familiar with), was exquisite; and his eye for the beauties of nature was as fine and delicate as ever poet or painter was gifted with, in some discriminations, owing to his education and way of life, far superior to any person’s I ever knew. But, alas! what avails it? It was the will of God that he should be taken away.

I trust in God that I shall not want fortitude; but my loss is great and irreparable.

* Due to Wordsworth’s father from James, Earl of Lonsdale, at whose death, in 1802, it was paid by his Lordship’s successor, and divided among the five children.

Many thanks for the offer of your house ; but I am not likely to be called to town. Lady Beaumont gives us hope we may see you next summer : this would, indeed, be great joy to us all. My sister thanks Lady B. for her affectionate remembrance of her and her letter, and will write as soon as ever she feels herself able. Her health, as was to be expected, has suffered much.

Your most affectionate friend,
W. WORDSWORTH.

Again :

Grasmere, March 12. 1805.

As I have said, your last letter affected me much. A thousand times have I asked myself, as your tender sympathy led me to do, ‘ why was he taken away ? ’ and I have answered the question as you have done. In fact, there is no other answer which can satisfy and lay the mind at rest. Why have we a choice, and a will, and a notion of justice and injustice, enabling us to be moral agents ? Why have we sympathies that make the best of us so afraid of inflicting pain and sorrow, which yet we see dealt about so lavishly by the Supreme Governor ? Why should our notions of right towards each other, and to all sentient beings within our influence, differ so widely from what appears to be His notion and rule, *if every thing were to end here ?* Would it not be blasphemy to say that, upon the supposition of the thinking principle being *destroyed by death*, however inferior we may be to the great Cause and Ruler of things, we have *more of love* in our nature than He has ? The thought is monstrous ; and yet how to get rid of it, except upon the supposition of *another* and a *better world*, I do not see. As to my departed brother, who leads our minds at present to these reflections, he walked all his life pure among many impure. Except a little hastiness of temper, when any thing was done in a clumsy or bungling manner, or when improperly contradicted upon occasions of not much importance, he had not one vice of his profession. I never heard an oath, or even an indelicate expression or allusion, from him in my life ; his modesty was equal to that of the purest woman. In prudence, in meekness, in self-denial, in fortitude, in just desires and elegant and refined enjoyments, with an entire simplicity of manners, life, and habit, he was all

that could be wished for in man; strong in health, and of a noble person, with every hope about him that could render life dear, thinking of, and living only for, others,—and we see what has been his end! So good must be better; so high must be destined to be higher.

I will take this opportunity of saying, that the newspaper accounts of the loss of the ship are throughout grossly inaccurate. The chief facts I will state, in a few words, from the deposition at the India House of one of the surviving officers. She struck at 5 P.M. Guns were fired immediately, and were continued to be fired. She was gotten off the rock at half-past seven, but had taken in so much water, in spite of constant pumping, as to be water-logged. They had, however, hope that she might still be run upon Weymouth Sands, and with this view continued pumping and baling till eleven, when she went down. The long-boat could not be hoisted out, as, had that been done, there would have been no possibility of the ship being run aground. I have mentioned these things, because the newspaper accounts were such as tended to throw discredit on my brother's conduct and personal firmness, stating that the ship had struck an hour and a half before guns were fired, and that, in the agony of the moment, the boats had been forgotten to be hoisted out. We knew well this could not be; but, for the sake of the relatives of the persons lost, it distressed us much that it should have been said. A few minutes before the ship went down, my brother was seen talking with the first mate, with apparent cheerfulness; and he was standing on the hen-coop, which is the point from which he could overlook the whole ship, the moment she went down, dying, as he had lived, in the very place and point where his duty stationed him. I must beg your pardon for detaining you so long on this melancholy subject; and yet it is not altogether melancholy, for what nobler spectacle can be contemplated than that of a virtuous man, with a serene countenance, in such an overwhelming situation? I will here transcribe a passage which I met with the other day in a review; it is from Aristotle's 'Synopsis of the Virtues and Vices':* 'It is,' says he, 'the property of fortitude not to be easily terrified by the dread of things pertaining to death; to possess good confidence

* Vol. ix. p. 395, ed. Bekker. Oxon. 1837.

in things terrible, and presence of mind in dangers ; rather to prefer to be put to death worthily, than to be preserved basely ; and to be the cause of victory. Moreover, it is the property of fortitude to labour and endure, and to make valorous exertion an object of choice. Further, presence of mind, a well-disposed soul, confidence and boldness are the attendants on fortitude ; and, besides these, industry and patience.' Except in the circumstance of making valorous exertion an '*object of choice*' (if the philosopher alludes to general habits of character), my brother might have sat for this picture ; but he was of a meek and retired nature, loving all quiet things.

I remain, dear Sir George,

Your most affectionate friend,

W. WORDSWORTH.

The following, to his friend Southey, was written the morrow after the arrival of the sad tidings :

Tuesday Evening, Grasmere, 1805.

We see nothing here that does not remind us of our dear brother ; there is nothing about us (save the children, whom he had not seen) that he has not known and loved.

If you could bear to come to this house of mourning to-morrow, I should be for ever thankful. We weep much to-day, and that relieves us. As to fortitude, I hope I shall show that, and that all of us will show it in a proper time, in keeping down many a silent pang hereafter. But grief will, as you say, and must, have its course ; there is no wisdom in attempting to check it under the circumstances which we are all of us in here.

I condole with you, from my soul, on the melancholy account of your own brother's situation ; God grant you may not hear such tidings ! Oh ! it makes the heart groan, that, with such a beautiful world as this to live in, and such a soul as that of man's is by nature and gift of God, that we should go about on such errands as we do, destroying and laying waste ; and ninety-nine of us in a hundred never easy in any road that travels towards peace and quietness. And yet, what virtue and what goodness, what heroism and courage, what triumphs of disinterested love everywhere, and human life, after all, what is it ! Surely, this is not to be for ever, even on this perishable

planet ! Come to us to-morrow, if you can ; your conversation, I know, will do me good.

All send best remembrances to you all.

Your affectionate friend,

W. WORDSWORTH.

The following, to another friend, completes the sad tale :

Grasmere, March 16. 1805.

He wrote to us from Portsmouth, about twelve days before this disaster, full of hopes, saying that he was to sail to-morrow. Of course, at the time when we heard this deplorable news, we imagined that he was as far on his voyage as Madeira. It was, indeed, a thunderstroke to us ! The language which he held was always so encouraging, saying that ships were, in nine instances out of ten, lost by mismanagement : he had, indeed, a great fear of pilots, and I have often heard him say, that no situation could be imagined more distressing than that of being at the mercy of these men. ‘ Oh ! ’ said he, ‘ it is a joyful hour for us when we get rid of them.’ His fears, alas ! were too well founded ; his own ship was lost while under the management of the pilot, whether mismanaged by him or not, I do not know ; but know for certain, which is, indeed, our great consolation, that our dear brother did all that man could do, even to the sacrifice of his own life. The newspaper accounts were grossly inaccurate ; indeed, that must have been obvious to any person who could bear to think upon the subject, for they were absolutely unintelligible. There are two pamphlets upon the subject ; one a mere transcript from the papers ; the other may be considered, as to all important particulars, as of authority ; it is by a person high in the India House, and contains the deposition of the surviving officers concerning the loss of the ship. The pamphlet, I am told, is most unfeelingly written : I have only seen an extract from it, containing Gilpin’s deposition, the fourth mate. From this, it appears that every thing was done that could be done, under the circumstances, for the safety of the lives and the ship. My poor brother was standing on the hen-coop (which is placed upon the poop, and is the most commanding situation in the vessel) when she went down, and he was

thence washed overboard by a large sea, which sank the ship. He was seen struggling with the waves some time afterwards, having laid hold, it is said, of a rope. He was an excellent swimmer; but what could it avail in such a sea, encumbered with his clothes, and exhausted in body, as he must have been!

For myself, I feel that there is something cut out of my life which cannot be restored. I never thought of him but with hope and delight: we looked forward to the time, not distant, as we thought, when he would settle near us, when the task of his life would be over, and he would have nothing to do but reap his reward. By that time, I hoped also that the chief part of my labours would be executed, and that I should be able to show him that he had not placed a false confidence in me. I never wrote a line without a thought of its giving him pleasure: my writings, printed and manuscript, were his delight, and one of the chief solaces of his long voyages. But let me stop: I will not be cast down; were it only for his sake, I will not be dejected. I have much yet to do, and pray God to give me strength and power: his part of the agreement between us is brought to an end, mine continues; and I hope when I shall be able to think of him with a calmer mind, that the remembrance of him dead will even animate me more than the joy which I had in him living. I wish you would procure the pamphlet I have mentioned; you may know the right one, by its having a motto from Shakspeare, from Clarence's dream. I wish you to see it, that you may read G.'s statement, and be enabled, if the affair should ever be mentioned in your hearing, to correct the errors which they must have fallen into who have taken their ideas from the newspaper accounts. I have dwelt long, too long I fear, upon this subject, but I could not write to you upon any thing else, till I had unburthened my heart. We have great consolations from the sources you allude to; but, alas! we have much yet to endure. Time only can give us regular tranquillity. We neither murmur nor repine, but sorrow we must; we should be senseless else.*

* *Memoirs*, i. 288-98.

30. *Of Dryden.*

LETTER TO SIR WALTER SCOTT.*

Paterdale, Nov. 7. 1805.

MY DEAR SCOTT,

I was much pleased to hear of your engagement with Dryden: not that he is, as a poet, any great favourite of mine. I admire his talents and genius highly, but his is not a poetical genius. The only qualities I can find in Dryden that are *essentially* poetical, are a certain ardour and impetuosity of mind, with an excellent ear. It may seem strange that I do not add to this, great command of language. *That* he certainly has, and of such language too, as it is most desirable that a poet should possess, or rather, that he should not be without. But it is not language that is, in the highest sense of the word, poetical, being neither of the imagination nor of the passions; I mean the amiable, the ennobling, or the intense passions. I do not mean to say that there is nothing of this in Dryden, but as little, I think, as is possible, considering how much he has written. You will easily understand my meaning, when I refer to his versification of ‘Palamon and Arcite,’ as contrasted with the language of Chaucer. Dryden had neither a tender heart nor a lofty sense of moral dignity. Whenever his language is poetically impassioned, it is mostly upon unpleasing subjects, such as the follies, vices, and crimes of classes of men, or of individuals. That his cannot be the language of imagination, must have necessarily followed from this,—that there is not a single image from Nature in the whole body of his works; and in his translation from Virgil, whenever Virgil can be fairly said to have his *eye* upon his object, Dryden always spoils the passage.

But too much of this; I am glad that you are to be his editor. His political and satirical pieces may be greatly benefited by illustration, and even absolutely require it. A correct text is the first object of an editor; then such notes as explain difficult or obscure passages; and lastly, which is much less important, notes pointing out authors to whom the Poet has been indebted, not in the fiddling way of phrase here and phrase

* From Lockhart’s *Life of Scott*, vol. ii. pp. 287-9 (edit. 1856).

there (which is detestable as a general practice), but where he has had essential obligations either as to matter or manner.

If I can be of any use to you, do not fail to apply to me. One thing I may take the liberty to suggest, which is, when you come to the fables, might it not be advisable to print the whole of the Tales of Boccace in a smaller type in the original language? If this should look too much like swelling a book, I should certainly make such extracts as would show where Dryden has most strikingly improved upon, or fallen below, his original. I think his translations from Boccace are the best, at least the most poetical, of his poems. It is many years since I saw Boccace, but I remember that Sigismunda is not married by him to Guiscard (the names are different in Boccace in both tales, I believe, certainly in Theodore, &c.). I think Dryden has much injured the story by the marriage, and degraded Sigismunda's character by it. He has also, to the best of my remembrance, degraded her still more, by making her love absolute sensuality and appetite; Dryden had no other notion of the passion. With all these defects, and they are very gross ones, it is a noble poem. Guiscard's answer, when first reproached by Tancred, is noble in Boccace, nothing but this: *Amor può molto più che ne voi ne io possiamo.* This, Dryden has spoiled. He says first very well, 'The faults of love by love are justified,' and then come four lines of miserable rant, quite à la Maximin. Farewell, and believe me ever,

Your affectionate friend,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

31. *Of Marmion.*

EXTRACT OF LETTER TO SIR WALTER SCOTT (1808).

Thank you for 'Marmion.' I think your end has been attained. That it is not the end which I should wish you to propose to yourself, you will be well aware, from what you know of my notions of composition, both as to matter and manner. In the circle of my acquaintance it seems as well liked as the 'Lay,' though I have heard that in the world it is not so. Had the Poem been much better than the Lay, it could scarcely have satisfied the public, which has too much of the monster, the moral monster, in its composition. The Spring has burst out

upon us all at once, and the vale is now in exquisite beauty ; a gentle shower has fallen this morning, and I hear the thrush, who has built in my orchard, singing amain. How happy we should be to see you here again ! Ever, my dear Scott, your sincere friend,

W. W.*

32. *Topographical History, &c.*

LETTER TO REV. FRANCIS WRANGHAM, HUNMANBY, NEAR
BRIDLINGTON, YORKSHIRE.

Grasmere, Oct. 2. 1808.

MY DEAR WRANGHAM,

In what are you employed—I mean by way of amusement and relaxation from your professional duties ? Is there any topographical history of your neighbourhood ? I remember reading White's *Natural History and Antiquities of Selbourne* with great pleasure, when a boy at school, and I have lately read Dr. Whitaker's *History of Craven and Whalley*, both with profit and pleasure. Would it not be worth your while to give some of your leisure hours to a work of this kind, making those works partly your model, and adding thereto from the originality of your own mind ?

With your activity you might produce something of this kind of general interest, taking for your limit any division in your neighbourhood, natural, ecclesiastical, or civil : suppose, for example, the coast from the borders of Cleveland, or from Scarborough, to Spurnhead ; and inward into the country to any boundary that you might approve of. Pray think of this. I am induced to mention it from belief that you are admirably qualified for such a work ; that it would pleasantly employ your leisure hours ; and from a regret in seeing works of this kind, which might be made so very interesting, utterly marred by falling into the hands of wretched bunglers, *e.g.* the *History of Cleveland*, which I have just read, by a Clergyman of —, the most heavy performance I ever encountered ; and what an interesting district ! Pray let me hear from you soon.

Affectionately and sincerely yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.†

* Lockhart's *Life*, iii. 45-6.

† *Memoirs*, i. 385-6.

33. *The War in Spain: Benefactors of Mankind, &c.*

TO THE SAME.

Grasmere, Dec. 3. 1808.

MY DEAR WRANGHAM,

On the other side you have the prospectus of a weekly essay intended to be published by your friend Coleridge.

Your Sermon did not reach me till the night before last; we have all read it, and are much pleased with it. Upon the whole, I like it better than the last: it must have been heard with great interest. I differ, however, from you in a few particulars. 1st. The Spaniards ‘devoting themselves for an imprisoned Bourbon, or the crumbling relics of the Inquisition.’ This is very fair for pointing a sentence, but it is not the truth. They have told us over and over again, that they are *fighting against a foreign tyrant*, who has dealt with them most perfidiously and inhumanly, who must hate them for their worth, and whom they must hate accordingly; *against* a ruler over whom they could have no control, and *for* one whom they have told us they will establish as a sovereign of a *free* people, and therefore must he himself be a limited monarch. You will permit me to make to you this representation for its truth’s sake, and because it gives me an opportunity of letting out a secret, viz. that I myself am very deep in this subject, and about to publish upon it, first, I believe, in a newspaper, for the sake of immediate and wide circulation; and next, the same matter in a separate pamphlet, under the title of ‘The Convention of Cintra brought to the test of principles, and the people of Great Britain vindicated from the charge of having prejudged it.’ You will wonder to hear me talk of principles when I have told you that I also do not go along with you in your sentiments respecting the Roman Catholic question. I confess I am not prepared to see the Roman Catholic religion as the Established Church of Ireland; and how that can be consistently refused to them, if other things are granted on the plea of their being the majority, I do not see. Certainly this demand will follow, and how would it be answered?

There is yet another circumstance in which I differ from

you. If Dr. Bell's plan of education be of that importance which it appears to be of, it cannot be a matter of indifference whether he or Lancaster have a rightful claim to the invention. For Heaven's sake let all benefactors of their species have the honour due to them. Virgil gives a high place in Elysium to the improvers of life, and it is neither the least philosophical or least poetical passage of the *Aeneid*.* These points of difference being stated, I may say that in other things I greatly approve both of the matter and manner of your Sermon.

Do not fail to return my best thanks to the lady to whom I am obliged for the elegant and accurate drawing of Broughton Church. I should have written to thank her and you for it immediately, but I foresaw that I should have occasion to write to you on this or other business.

All here desire their best remembrances; and believe me (in great haste, for I have several other letters to write on the same subject), affectionately yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.†

34. *The Convention of Cintra: the Roman Catholics.*

TO THE SAME.

Workington, April 3. 1809.

MY DEAR WRANGHAM,

You will think I am afraid that I have used you ill in not replying sooner to your last letter; particularly as you were desirous to be informed in what newspaper my Pamphlet was printing. I should not have failed to give you immediately any information upon this subject which could be of use; but in fact, though I began to publish in a newspaper, viz. the *Courier*, an accidental loss of two or three sheets of the manuscript prevented me from going on in that mode of publication after two sections had appeared. The Pamphlet will be out in less than a fortnight, entitled, at full length, 'Concerning the relations of Great Britain, Spain, and Portugal, to each other, and to the common enemy at this crisis, and specifically as affected by the Convention of Cintra; the whole brought to the test of those principles by which alone the independence and freedom of nations can be preserved or recovered.' This is less

* 'Quique sui memores alios fecere merendo.' *AEn.* vi. 664.

† *Memoirs*, i. 386-8.

a Title than a Table of Contents. I give it you at full length in order that you may set your fancy at work (if you have no better employment for it) upon what the Pamphlet may contain. I sent off the last sheets only a day or two since, else I should have written to you sooner ; it having been my intention to pay my debt to you the moment I had discharged this debt to my country. What I have written has been done according to the best light of my conscience : it is indeed very imperfect, and will, I fear, be little read ; but if it is read, cannot, I hope, fail of doing some good ; though I am aware it will create me a world of enemies, and call forth the old yell of Jacobinism. I have not sent it to any personal friends as such, therefore I have made no exception in your case. I have ordered it to be sent to two, the Spanish and Portuguese Ambassadors, and three or four other public men and Members of Parliament, but to nobody of my friends and relations. It is printed with my name, and, I believe, will be published by Longman. . . . I am very happy that you have not been inattentive to my suggestion on the subject of Topography. When I ventured to recommend the pursuit to you, I did not for a moment suppose that it was to interfere with your appropriate duties as a parish priest ; far otherwise : but I know you are of an active mind, and I am sure that a portion of your time might be thus employed without any deduction from that which was due to your professional engagements. It would be a recreation to you ; and also it does appear to me that records of this kind ought to be executed by somebody or other, both for the instruction of those now living and for the sake of posterity ; and if so, the duty devolves more naturally upon clergymen than upon other persons, as their opportunities and qualifications are both likely to be better than those of other men. If you have not seen White's and Whitaker's books do procure a sight of them.

I was aware that you would think me fair game upon the Roman Catholic question ; but really I should be greatly obliged to any man who would help me over the difficulty I stated. If the Roman Catholics, upon the plea of their being the majority merely (which implies an admission on our part that their profession of faith is in itself as good as ours, as consistent with civil liberty), if they are to have their requests accorded, how can they be refused (consistently) the further prayer of being

constituted, upon the same plea, the Established Church? I confess I am not prepared for this. With the Methodists on one side and the Catholics on the other, what is to become of the poor church and the people of England? to both of which I am most tenderly attached, and to the former not the less so, on account of the pretty little spire of Broughton Parish Church, under which you and I were made happy men by the gift from Providence of two excellent wives. To Mrs. Wrangham, present my cordial regards, and believe me, dear Wrangham, your very

Sincere and affectionate friend,

W. WORDSWORTH.*

35. *The Tractate on ‘The Convention of Cintra.’*

LETTER TO LORD LONSDALE.

Grasmere, May 25 [1809].

MY LORD,

I had also another reason for deferring this acknowledgment to your Lordship, viz. that at the same time I wished to present to you a Tract which I have lately written, and which I hope you have now received. It was finished, and ought to have appeared, two months ago, but has been delayed by circumstances (connected with my distance from the press) over which I had no control. If this Tract should so far interest your Lordship as to induce you to peruse it, I do not doubt that it will be thoughtfully and candidly judged by you; in which case I fear no censure, but that which every man is liable to who, with good intentions, may have occasionally fallen into error; while at the same time I have an entire confidence that the principles which I have endeavoured to uphold must have the sanction of a mind distinguished, like that of your Lordship, for regard to morality and religion, and the true dignity and honour of your country.

May I beg of your Lordship to present my respectful compliments to Lady Lonsdale.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

W. WORDSWORTH.†

* *Memoirs*, i. 388-90.

† *Ibid.* i. 390-1.

36. *Of 'The Convention of Cintra,' &c.*

LETTER TO SOUTHEY.

MY DEAR SOUTHEY,*

Col. Campbell, our neighbour at G., has sent for your book ; he served during the whole of the Peninsular war, and you shall hear what he says of it in *due course*. We are out of the way of all literary communication, so I can report nothing. I have read the whole with great pleasure ; the work will do you everlasting honour. I have said *the whole*, forgetting, in that contemplation, my feelings upon one part, where you have tickled with a feather when you should have branded with a red-hot iron. You will guess I mean the Convention of Cintra. My detestation, I may say abhorrence, of that event is not at all diminished by your account of it. Buonaparte had committed a capital blunder in supposing that when he had *intimidated* the *Sovereigns* of Europe he had *conquered* the several *Nations*. Yet it was natural for a wiser than he was to have fallen into this mistake ; for the old despotisms had deprived the body of the people of all practical knowledge in the management, and, of necessity, of all interest, in the course of affairs. The French themselves were astonished at the apathy and ignorance of the people whom they had supposed they had utterly subdued, when they had taken their fortresses, scattered their armies, entered their capital cities, and struck their cabinets with dismay. There was no hope for the deliverance of Europe till the nations had suffered enough to be driven to a passionate recollection of all that was honourable in their past history, and to make appeal to the principles of universal and everlasting justice. These sentiments, the authors of that Convention most unfeelingly violated ; and as to the principles, they seemed to be as little aware even of the existence of such powers, for powers emphatically may they be called, as the tyrant himself. As far, therefore, as these men could, they put an extinguisher upon the star which was then rising. It is in vain to say that after the first burst of indignation was over, the Portuguese themselves were reconciled to the event, and

* Mr. Southey's opinions on the Convention of Cintra, at the time of its ratification, were in unison with those of his friend. See Southey's *Correspondence*, vol. iii. p. 177-180.

rejoiced in their deliverance. We may infer from that the horror which they must have felt in the presence of their oppressors ; and we may see in it to what a state of helplessness their bad government had reduced them. Our duty was to have treated them with respect as the representatives of suffering humanity beyond what they were likely to look for themselves, and as deserving greatly, in common with their Spanish brethren, for having been the first to rise against the tremendous oppression, and to show how, and how only, it could be put an end to.

WM. WORDSWORTH.*

37. *Home at Grasmere : ‘The Parsonage.’*

‘The house which I have for some time occupied is the Parsonage of Grasmere. It stands close by the churchyard [where his two children were buried], and I have found it absolutely necessary that we should quit a place which, by recalling to our minds at every moment the losses we have sustained in the course of the last year [1811-12] would grievously retard our progress toward that tranquillity which it is our duty to aim at.’†

38. *On Education of the Young.*

LETTER TO PROFESSOR HAMILTON, OBSERVATORY,
DUBLIN.

Lowther Castle, Sunday Mor[ning] [Sept. 26, 1830].

MY DEAR MR. HAMILTON,

I profit by the frank in which the letter for your sister will be enclosed, to thank you for yours of the 11th, and the accompanying spirited and elegant verses. You ask many questions, kindly testifying thereby the interest you take in us and our neighbourhood. Most probably some of them are answered in my daughter’s letter to Miss E. H. I will, however, myself reply to one or two at the risk of repeating what she may have said. 1st. Mrs. Hemans has not sent us any tidings of her movements and intentions since she left us ; so I am unable to tell you whether she mean to settle in Edinburgh or London.

* *Memoirs*, i. 391-3.

† Letter to Lord Lonsdale, Jan. 8. 1813 : *Memoirs*, ii. 2.

She said she would write as soon as she could procure a frank. That accommodation is, I suppose, more rare in Scotland than at this season in our neighbourhood. I assure you the weather has been so unfavourable to out-door amusements since you left us (not but that we have had a sprinkling of fine and bright days), that little or no progress has been made in the game of the Graces ; and I fear that amusement must be deferred till next summer, if we or anybody else are to see another. Mr. Barber has dined with us once, and my sister and Mrs. Marshall, of Halsteads, have seen his palace and grounds ; but I cannot report upon the general state of his temper. I believe he continues to be enchanted, as far as decayed health will allow, with a Mr. Cooper, a clergyman who has just come to the living of Hawkshead (about five miles from Ambleside). Did I tell you that Professor Wilson, with his two sons and daughter, have been, and probably still are, at Elleray ? He heads the gaieties of the neighbourhood, and has presided as steward at two regattas. Do these employments come under your notions of action opposed to contemplation ? Why should they not ? Whatever the high moralists may say, the political economists will, I conclude, approve them as setting capital afloat, and giving an impulse to manufacture and handicrafts ; but I speak of the improvement which may come thence to navigation and nautical science. I have dined twice along with my brother (who left us some time ago) in the Professor's company—at Mrs. Watson's, widow of the Bp., at Calgarth, and at Mr. Bolton's. Poor Mr. B. ! he must have been greatly shocked at the fatal accident that put an end to his friend Huskisson's earthly career. There is another acquaintance of mine also recently gone—a person for whom I never had any love, but with whom I had for a short time a good deal of intimacy. I mean Hazlitt, whose death you may have seen announced in the papers. He was a man of extraordinary acuteness, but perverse as Lord Byron himself ; whose life by Galt I have been skimming since I came here. Galt affects to be very profound, though [he] is in fact a very shallow fellow,—and perhaps the most illogical writer that these illogical days have produced. His ‘buts’ and his ‘therefores’ are singularly misapplied, singularly even for this unthinking age. He accuses Mr. Southey of pursuing Lord B—— with *rancour*. I should like a reference to what Mr. S—— has written of Lord B——,

to ascertain whether this charge be well founded. I trust it is not, both from what I know of my friend, and for the aversion which Mr. G—— has expressed towards the Lakers, whom in the plenitude of his ignorance he is pleased to speak of as a *class or school* of Poets.

Now for a word on the serious part of your letter. Your views of action and contemplation are, I think, just. If you can lay your hands upon Mr. Coleridge's 'Friend,' you will find some remarks of mine upon a letter signed, if I recollect right, 'Mathetes,' which was written by Professor Wilson, in which, if I am not mistaken, sentiments like yours are expressed. At all events, I am sure that I have long retained those opinions, and have frequently expressed them either by letter or otherwise. One thing, however, is not to be forgotten concerning active life—that a personal independence must be provided for ; and in some cases more is required—ability to assist our friends, relations, and natural dependents. The party are at breakfast, and I must close this wretched scrawl, which pray excuse.

Ever faithfully yours,

WM. WORDSWORTH.*

Pray continue to write at your leisure. How could I have forgot so long to thank you for your obliging present, which I shall value on every account ?

39. *Roman Catholics : Bible Society, &c.*

LETTER TO ARCHDEACON WRANGHAM.

Grasmere, March 27 [1811].

MY DEAR WRANGHAM,

Your last letter, which I have left so long unanswered, found me in a distressed state of mind, with one of my children lying nearly, as I thought, at the point of death. This put me off answering your letter.

You return to the R. Catholic Question. I am decidedly of opinion that no further concessions should be made. The R. Catholic Emancipation is a mere pretext of ambitious and discontented men. Are you prepared for the next step—a R. Catholic Established Church ? I confess I dread the thought.

As to the Bible Society, my view of the subject is as fol-

* *Memoirs*, i. 433, with important additions from the ms. G.

lows :—1st. Distributing Bibles is a good thing. 2ndly. More Bibles will be distributed in consequence of the existence of the Bible Society ; therefore, so far as that goes, the existence of the Bible Society is good. But, 3rdly, as to the *indirect* benefits expected from it, as producing a golden age of unanimity among Christians, all that I think fume and emptiness ; nay, far worse. So deeply am I persuaded that discord and artifice, and pride and ambition, would be fostered by such an approximation and unnatural alliance of sects, that I am inclined to think the evil thus produced would more than outweigh the good done by dispersing the Bibles. I think the last fifty or sixty pages of my brother's pamphlet* merit the serious consideration of all persons of the Established Church who have connected themselves with the sectaries for this purpose.

Entreating your pardon for my long delay in answering your letter, let me conclude with assuring you that I remain, with great truth, your affectionate friend,

W. WORDSWORTH.†

40. *Death of Children: Politics, &c.*

Rydal Mount, near Ambleside, Aug. 28, 1813.

MY DEAR WRANGHAM,

Your letter arrived when I was on the point of going from home on business. I took it with me, intending to answer it upon the road, but I had not courage to undertake the office on account of the inquiries it contains concerning my family. I will be brief on this melancholy subject. In the course of the last year I have lost two sweet children, a girl and a boy, at the ages of four and six and a half. These innocents were the delight of our hearts, and beloved by everybody that knew them. They were cut off in a few hours—one by the measles, and the other by convulsions ; dying, one half a year after the other. I quit this sorrowful subject, secure of your sympathy as a father and as my friend.

My employment I find salutary to me, and of consequence in

* *Reasons for declining to become a Subscriber to the British and Foreign Bible Society*, by Christopher Wordsworth, D.D., Dean of Bocking. Lond. 1810. See also his *Letter to Lord Teignmouth* in vindication of the above Letter. Lond. 1810.

† *Memoirs*, ii. 8-9.

a pecuniary point of view, as my literary employments bring me no remuneration, nor promise any. As to what you say about the Ministry, I very much prefer the course of their policy to that of the Opposition ; especially on two points most near my heart : resistance of Buonaparte by force of arms, and their adherence to the principles of the British Constitution in withholding political power from the Roman Catholics. My most determined hostility shall always be directed against those statesmen who, like Whitbread, Grenville, and others, would crouch to a sanguinary tyrant ; and I cannot act with those who see no danger to the Constitution in introducing papists into Parliament. There are other points of policy in which I deem the Opposition grievously mistaken, and therefore I am at present, and long have been, by principle, a supporter of ministers, as far as my little influence extends. With affectionate wishes for your welfare and that of your family, and with best regards to Mrs. Wrangham, I am, my dear friend,

Faithfully yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.*

41. *Letter of Introduction: Humour.*

TO ARCHDEACON WRANGHAM.

Rydal Mount, near Kendal, April 26. 1814.

MY DEAR WRANGHAM,

I trouble you with this in behalf of a very deserving young clergyman of the name of Jameson, who is just gone from this neighbourhood to a curacy at Sherbourne, in the neighbourhood of Ferry Bridge. He has a mother and a younger brother dependent upon his exertions, and it is his wish to take pupils in order to increase his income, which, as he is a curate, you know, cannot but be small. He is an excellent young man, a good scholar, and likely to become much better, for he is extremely industrious. Among his talents I must mention that for drawing, in which he is a proficient. Now my wish is that, if it fall in your way, you would vouchsafe him your patronage.

Of course, you cannot speak for him directly till you have seen him ; but, might he be permitted to refer to you, you could have no objection to say that you were as yet ignorant of his

* *Memoirs*, ii. 9-10.

merits as to your own knowledge, but that ‘your esteemed friend Mr. Wordsworth, that *popular* poet, stamp-collector for Westmoreland, &c., had recommended him strenuously to you as in all things deserving.’

A portion of a long poem* from me will see the light ere long; I hope it will give you pleasure. It is serious, and has been written with great labour. . . .

I mean to make a tour in Scotland with Mrs. W—— and her sister, Miss Hutchinson. I congratulate you on the overthrow of the execrable despot, and the complete triumph of the *war faction*, of which noble body I have the honour to be as active a member as my abilities and industry would allow. Best remembrances to yourself and Mrs. Wrangham,

And believe me affectionately yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.†

42. *The Peninsular War.*

LETTER TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

—, 1827.

MY DEAR SIR,

Edith thanked you, in my name, for your valuable present of the ‘Peninsular War.’ I have read it with great delight: it is beautifully written, and a most interesting story. I did not notice a single sentiment or opinion that I could have wished away but one—where you support the notion that, if the Duke of Wellington had not lived and commanded, Buonaparte must have continued the master of Europe. I do not object to this from any dislike I have to the Duke, but from a conviction—I trust, a philosophic one—that Providence would not allow the upsetting of so diabolical a system as Buonaparte’s to depend upon the existence of any individual. Justly was it observed by Lord Wellesley, that Buonaparte was of an order of minds that created for themselves great reverses. He might have gone further, and said that it is of the nature of tyranny to work to its own destruction.‡

The sentence of yours which occasioned these loose remarks is, as I said, the only one I objected to, while I met with a

* ‘The Excursion,’ published 1814.

† *Memoirs*, ii. 10-11.

‡ As has been said by Demosthenes.

thousand things to admire. Your sympathy with the great cause is every where energetically and feelingly expressed. What fine fellows were Alvarez and Albuquerque; and how deeply interesting the siege of Gerona!

I have not yet mentioned dear Sir George Beaumont.* His illness was not long; and he was prepared by habitually thinking on his latter end. But it is impossible not to grieve for ourselves, for his loss cannot be supplied. Let dear Edith stay as long as you can; and when she must go, pray come for her, and stay a few days with us. Farewell.

Ever most affectionately yours,

W. W——.†

43. *Of the Writings of Southey.*

LETTER TO G. HUNTLY GORDON, ESQ.

Rydal Mount, May 14. 1829.

Mr. Southey means to present me (as usual) his ‘Colloquies,’ &c. There is, perhaps, not a page of them that he did not read me in ms.; and several of the Dialogues are upon subjects which we have often discussed. I am greatly interested with much of the book; but upon its effect as a whole I can yet form no opinion, as it was read to me as it happened to be written. I need scarcely say that Mr. Southey ranks very highly, in my opinion, as a prose writer. His style is eminently clear, lively, and unencumbered, and his information unbounded; and there is a moral ardour about his compositions which nobly distinguishes them from the trading and factious authorship of the present day. He may not improbably be our companion in Wales next year. At the end of this month he goes, with his family, to the Isle of Man for sea-air; and said, if I would accompany him, and put off the Welsh tour for another year, he would join our party. Notwithstanding the inducement, I could not bring myself to consent; but as things now are, I shall remind him of the hope he held out.

Believe me, very faithfully, yours,

WM. WORDSWORTH.

There is no probability of my being in town this season. I

* Who died Feb. 7, 1827.

† *Memoirs*, ii. 20-1.

have a horror of smoking; and nothing but a necessity for health's sake could reconcile me to it in William.*

44. *Of alleged Changes in Political Opinions.*

LETTER TO A FRIEND, 1821.

In the year 1821 (October 7) an old friend of Wordsworth thus writes to him: 'They tell me you have changed your opinions upon many subjects respecting which we used to think alike; but I am persuaded we shall neither of us change those great principles which ought to guide us in our conduct, and lead us to do all the good we can to others. And I am much mistaken if we should not find many things to talk about without disturbing ourselves with political or party disputes.'

To this Wordsworth answered as follows:

Rydal Mount, Dec. 4. 1821.

MY DEAR L——,

Your letter ought to have been much earlier acknowledged, and would have been so, had I not been sure you would ascribe my silence to its true cause, viz. procrastination, and not to indifference to your kind attention. There was another feeling which both urged and indisposed me to write to you,—I mean the allusion which, in so friendly a manner, you make to a supposed change in my political opinions. To the scribblers in pamphlets and periodical publications who have heaped so much obloquy upon myself and my friends Coleridge and Southey, I have not condescended to reply, nor ever shall; but to you, my candid and enlightened friend, I will say a few words on this subject, which, if we have the good fortune to meet again, as I hope we may, will probably be further dwelt upon.

I should think that I had lived to little purpose if my notions on the subject of government had undergone no modification: my youth must, in that case, have been without enthusiasm, and my manhood endued with small capability of profiting by reflection. If I were addressing those who have dealt so liberally with the words renegade, apostate, &c., I should retort the charge upon them, and say, *you* have been deluded by *places*

* *Memoirs*, ii. 22.

and persons, while I have stuck to *principles*. I abandoned France and her rulers when *they* abandoned the struggle for liberty, gave themselves up to tyranny, and endeavoured to enslave the world. I disapproved of the war against France at its commencement, thinking, which was, perhaps, an error, that it might have been avoided ; but after Buonaparte had violated the independence of Switzerland, my heart turned against him, and against the nation that could submit to be the instrument of such an outrage. Here it was that I parted, in feeling, from the Whigs, and to a certain degree united with their adversaries, who were free from the delusion (such I must ever regard it) of Mr. Fox and his party, that a safe and honourable peace was practicable with the French nation, and that an ambitious conqueror like Buonaparte could be softened down into a commercial rival.

In a determination, therefore, to aim at the overthrow of that inordinate ambition by war, I sided with the ministry, not from general approbation of their conduct, but as men who thought right on this essential point. How deeply this question interested me will be plain to any one who will take the trouble of reading my political sonnets, and the tract occasioned by the ‘Convention of Cintra,’ in which are sufficient evidences of my dissatisfaction with the mode of conducting the war, and a prophetic display of the course which it would take if carried on upon the principles of justice, and with due respect for the feelings of the oppressed nations.

This is enough for foreign politics, as influencing my attachments.

There are three great domestic questions, viz. the liberty of the press, parliamentary reform, and Roman Catholic concession, which, if I briefly advert to, no more need be said at present.

A free discussion of public measures through the press I deem the *only* safeguard of liberty : without it I have neither confidence in kings, parliaments, judges, or divines : they have all in their turn betrayed their country. But the press, so potent for good, is scarcely less so for evil ; and unfortunately they who are misled and abused by its means are the persons whom it can least benefit. It is the fatal characteristic of their disease to reject all remedies coming from the quarter that has caused or aggravated the malady. I am *therefore* for vigorous

restrictions ; but there is scarcely any abuse that I would not endure rather than sacrifice, or even endanger, this freedom.

When I was young (giving myself credit for qualities which I did not possess, and measuring mankind by that standard) I thought it derogatory to human nature to set up property in preference to person as a title for legislative power. That notion has vanished. I now perceive many advantages in our present complex system of representation which formerly eluded my observation ; this has tempered my ardour for reform : but if any plan could be contrived for throwing the representation fairly into the hands of the property of the country, and not leaving it so much in the hands of the large proprietors as it now is, it should have my best support ; though even in that event there would be a sacrifice of personal rights, independent of property, that are now frequently exercised for the benefit of the community.

Be not startled when I say that I am averse to further concessions to the Roman Catholics. My reasons are, that such concessions will not produce harmony among the Roman Catholics themselves ; that they among them who are most clamorous for the measure care little about it but as a step, first, to the overthrow of the Protestant establishment in Ireland, as introductory to a separation of the two countries—their ultimate aim ; that I cannot consent to take the character of a religion from the declaration of powerful professors of it disclaiming doctrines imputed to that religion ; that, taking its character from what it *actually teaches to the great mass*, I believe the Roman Catholic religion to be unchanged in its doctrines and unsoftened in its spirit,—how can it be otherwise unless the doctrine of Infallibility be given up ? that such concessions would set all other dissenters in motion—an issue which has never fairly been met by the friends to concession ; and deeming the Church Establishment not only a fundamental part of our constitution, but one of the greatest upholders and propagators of civilization in our own country, and, lastly, the most effectual and main support of religious Toleration, I cannot but look with jealousy upon measures which must reduce her relative influence, unless they be accompanied with arrangements more adequate than any yet adopted for the preservation and increase of that influence, to keep pace with the other powers in the community.

I do not apologise for this long letter, the substance of which you may report to any one worthy of a reply who, in your hearing, may animadvert upon my political conduct. I ought to have added, perhaps, a word on *local politics*, but I have not space; but what I should have said may in a great measure be deduced from the above.

I am, my dear L——,
Yours, &c. &c.,
W. W.*

45. *Of his Poems and others.*

LETTER TO BERNARD BARTON.

Rydal Mount, near Ambleside, Jan. 12. 1816.

DEAR SIR,

Though my sister, during my absence, has returned thanks in my name for the verses which you have done me the honour of addressing to me, and for the obliging letter which accompanies them, I feel it incumbent on me, on my return home, to write a few words to the same purpose, with my own hand.

It is always a satisfaction to me to learn that I have given pleasure upon *rational* grounds; and I have nothing to object to your poetical panegyric but the occasion which called it forth. An admirer of my works, zealous as you have declared yourself to be, condescends too much when he gives way to an impulse proceeding from the ——, or indeed from any other Review. The writers in these publications, while they prosecute their inglorious employment, cannot be supposed to be in a state of mind very favourable for being affected by the finer influences of a thing so pure as genuine poetry; and as to the instance which has incited you to offer me this tribute of your gratitude, though I have not seen it, I doubt not but that it is a splenetic effusion of the conductor of that Review, who has taken a perpetual retainer from his own incapacity to plead against my claims to public approbation.

I differ from you in thinking that the only poetical lines in your address are ‘stolen from myself.’ The best verse, perhaps, is the following:

‘Awfully mighty in his impotence,’

* *Memoirs*, ii. 23-27.

which, by way of repayment, I may be tempted to steal from you on some future occasion.

It pleases, though it does not surprise me, to learn that, having been affected early in life by my verses, you have returned again to your old loves after some little infidelities, which you were shamed into by commerce with the scribbling and chattering part of the world. I have heard of many who upon their first acquaintance with my poetry have had much to get over before they could thoroughly relish it ; but never of one who having once learned to enjoy it, had ceased to value it, or survived his admiration. This is as good an external assurance as I can desire, that my inspiration is from a pure source, and that my principles of composition are trustworthy.

With many thanks for your good wishes, and begging leave to offer mine in return,

I remain,

Dear Sir,

Respectfully yours,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

Bernard Barton, Esq., Woodbridge, Suffolk.

46. *Of the Thanksgiving Ode and 'White Doe of Rylston.'*

LETTER TO ROBERT SOUTHEY.

1816.

MY DEAR SOUTHEY,

I am much of your mind in respect to my Ode. Had it been a hymn, uttering the sentiments of a *multitude*, a *stanza* would have been indispensable. But though I have called it a 'Thanksgiving Ode,' strictly speaking it is not so, but a poem, composed, or supposed to be composed, on the morning of the thanksgiving, uttering the sentiments of an *individual* upon that occasion. It is a *dramatised ejaculation* ; and this, if any thing can, must excuse the irregular frame of the metre. In respect to a *stanza* for a grand subject designed to be treated comprehensively, there are great objections. If the stanza be short, it will scarcely allow of fervour and impetuosity, unless so short, as that the sense is run perpetually from one stanza to another, as in Horace's Alcaics ; and if it be long, it will be as apt to generate diffuseness as to check it. Of this we have in-

* *Memoirs*, ii. 52-4.

numerable instances in Spenser and the Italian poets. The sense required cannot be included in one given stanza, so that another whole stanza is added, not unfrequently, for the sake of matter which would naturally include itself in a very few lines.

If Gray's plan be adopted, there is not time to become acquainted with the arrangement, and to recognise with pleasure the recurrence of the movement.

Be so good as to let me know where you found most difficulty in following me. The passage which I most suspect of being misunderstood is,

‘ And thus is missed the sole true glory ;’

and the passage, where I doubt most about the reasonableness of expecting that the reader should follow me in the luxuriance of the imagery and the language, is the one that describes, under so many metaphors, the spreading of the news of the Waterloo victory over the globe. Tell me if this displeased you.

Do you know who reviewed ‘The White Doe,’ in the *Quarterly*? After having asserted that Mr. W. uses his words without any regard to their sense, the writer says, that on no other principle can he explain that Emily is *always* called ‘the consecrated Emily.’ Now, the name Emily occurs just fifteen times in the poem ; and out of these fifteen, the epithet is attached to it *once*, and that for the express purpose of recalling the scene in which she had been consecrated by her brother’s solemn adjuration, that she would fulfil her destiny, and become a soul,

‘ By force of sorrows high
Uplifted to the purest sky
Of undisturbed mortality.’

The point upon which the whole moral interest of the piece hinges, when that speech is closed, occurs in this line,

‘ He kissed the consecrated maid ;’

and to bring back this to the reader, I repeated the epithet.

The service I have lately rendered to Burns’ genius* will one day be performed to mine. The quotations, also, are printed with the most culpable neglect of correctness : there are lines turned into nonsense. Too much of this. Farewell !

Believe me affectionately yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.†

* See his ‘ Letter to a Friend of Burns.’

† *Memoirs*, ii. 60-1.

47. *Of Poems in Stanzas.*

LETTER TO ROBERT SOUTHEY.

DEAR SOUTHEY,

My opinion in respect to *epic poetry* is much the same as the critic whom Lucien Buonaparte has quoted in his preface. *Epic* poetry, of the highest class, requires in the first place an action eminently influential, an action with a grand or sublime train of consequences ; it next requires the intervention and guidance of beings superior to man, what the critics I believe call *machinery* ; and, lastly, I think with Dennis, that no subject but a religious one can answer the demand of the soul in the highest class of this species of poetry. Now Tasso's is a religious subject, and in my opinion, a most happy one ; but I am confidently of opinion that the *movement* of Tasso's poem rarely corresponds with the essential character of the subject ; nor do I think it possible that written in *stanzas* it should. The celestial movement cannot, I think, be kept up, if the sense is to be broken in that despotic manner at the close of every eight lines. Spenser's stanza is infinitely finer than the *ottava rhima*, but even Spenser's will not allow the epic movement as exhibited by Homer, Virgil, and Milton. How noble is the first paragraph of the *Aeneid* in point of sound, compared with the first stanza of the *Jerusalem Delivered* ! The one winds with the majesty of the Conscript Fathers entering the Senate House in solemn procession ; and the other has the pace of a set of recruits shuffling on the drill-ground, and receiving from the adjutant or drill-serjeant the commands to halt at every ten or twenty steps. Farewell.

Affectionately yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.*

48. *The Classics : Translation of Aeneid, &c.*

[Laodamia, Dion, &c.] These poems were written in 1814-16. About this time Wordsworth's attention was given to the education of his eldest son : this occupation appears to have been the occasion of their composition. In preparing his son for his university career, he reperused the principal Latin poets ;

* *Memoirs*, ii. 62-3.

and doubtless the careful study of their works was not without a beneficial influence on his own. It imparted variety and richness to his conceptions, and shed new graces on his style, and rescued his poems from the charge of mannerism.

Among the fruits of this course of reading, was a translation of some of the earlier books of VIRGIL'S AENEID. Three books were finished. This version was not executed in blank verse, but in rhyme; not, however, in the style of Pope, but with greater freedom and vigour. A specimen of this translation was contributed by Wordsworth to the *Philological Museum*, printed at Cambridge in 1832.* It was accompanied with the following letter from the author:—

TRANSLATION OF PART OF THE FIRST BOOK OF THE AENEID.†

To the Editor of the Philological Museum.

Your letter reminding me of an expectation I some time since held out to you, of allowing some specimens of my translation from the *Aeneid* to be printed in the *Philological Museum*, was not very acceptable; for I had abandoned the thought of ever sending into the world any part of that experiment—for it was nothing more—an experiment begun for amusement, and, I now think, a less fortunate one than when I first named it to you. Having been displeased, in modern translations, with the additions of incongruous matter, I began to translate with a resolve to keep clear of that fault, by adding nothing; but I became convinced that a spirited translation can scarcely be accomplished in the English language without admitting a principle of compensation. On this point, however, I do not wish to insist; and merely send the following passage, taken at random, from a wish to comply with your request.

W. W.‡

49. *On the same: Letters to Earl Lonsdale.*

MY LORD,

Many thanks for your obliging letter. I shall be much gratified if you happen to like my translation, and thankful for any remarks with which you may honour me. I have

* Vol. i. p. 382.

† *Philological Museum*, edit. Camb. 1832, vol. i. p. 382.

‡ *Memoirs*, ii. 68-9.

made so much progress with the second book, that I defer sending the former till that is finished. It takes in many places a high tone of passion, which I would gladly succeed in rendering. When I read Virgil in the original I am moved; but not so much so by the translation; and I cannot but think this owing to a defect in the diction, which I have endeavoured to supply, with what success you will easily be enabled to judge.

Ever, my Lord,

Most faithfully your obliged friend and servant,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

Feb. 5 [1829].

MY LORD,

I am truly obliged by your friendly and frank communication. May I beg that you would add to the favour, by marking with a pencil some of the passages that are faulty, in your view of the case? We seem pretty much of opinion upon the subject of rhyme. Pentameters, where the sense has a close of some sort at every two lines, may be rendered in regularly closed couplets; but hexameters (especially the Virgilian, that run the lines into each other for a great length) cannot. I have long been persuaded that Milton formed his blank verse upon the model of the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*, and I am so much struck with this resemblance, that I should have attempted Virgil in blank verse, had I not been persuaded that no ancient author can be with advantage so rendered. Their religion, their warfare, their course of action and feeling, are too remote from modern interest to allow it. We require every possible help and attraction of sound, in our language, to smooth the way for the admission of things so remote from our present concerns. My own notion of translation is, that it cannot be too literal, provided three faults be avoided: *baldness*, in which I include all that takes from dignity; and *strangeness* or *uncouthness*, including harshness; and lastly, attempts to convey meanings which, as they cannot be given but by languid circumlocutions, cannot in fact be said to be given at all. I will trouble you with an instance in which I fear this fault exists. Virgil, describing Aeneas's voyage, third book, verse 551, says—

‘ Hinc sinus Herculei, si vera est fama, Tarenti
Cernitur,’

* *Memoirs*, ii. 69.

I render it thus :

‘Hence we behold the bay that bears the name
Of proud Tarentum, proud to share the fame
Of Hercules, though by a dubious claim.’

I was unable to get the meaning with tolerable harmony into fewer words, which are more than to a modern reader, perhaps, it is worth.

I feel much at a loss, without the assistance of the marks which I have requested, to take an exact measure of your Lordship’s feelings with regard to the diction. To save you the trouble of reference, I will transcribe two passages from Dryden ; first, the celebrated appearance of Hector’s ghost to Aeneas. Aeneas thus addresses him :

‘ O light of Trojans and support of Troy,
Thy father’s champion, and thy country’s joy,
O long expected by thy friends, from whence
Art thou returned, so late for our defence ?
Do we behold thee, wearied as we are
With length of labours and with toils of war ?
After so many funerals of thy own,
Art thou restored to thy declining town ?’

This I think not an unfavourable specimen of Dryden’s way of treating the solemnly pathetic passages. Yet, surely, here is *nothing* of the *cadence* of the original, and little of its spirit. The second verse is not in the original, and ought not to have been in Dryden ; for it anticipates the beautiful hemistich,

‘ Sat patriae Priamoque datum.’

By the by, there is the same sort of anticipation in a spirited and harmonious couplet preceding :

‘ Such as he was when by *Pelides* slain
Thessalian coursers dragged him o’er the plain.’

This introduction of Pelides here is not in Virgil, because it would have prevented the effect of

‘ Redit exuvias indutus Achillei.’

There is a striking solemnity in the answer of Pantheus to Aeneas :

‘ Venit summa dies et ineluctabile tempus
Dardaniae : fuimus Troës, fuit Ilium, et ingens
Gloria Teucrorum,’ &c.

Dryden thus gives it :

'Then Pantheus, with a groan,
 Troy is no more, and Ilium was a town.
 The fatal day, the appointed hour is come
 When wrathful Jove's irrevocable doom
 Transfers the Trojan state to Grecian hands.
 The fire consumes the town, the foe commands.'

My own translation runs thus; and I quote it because it occurred to my mind immediately on reading your Lordship's observations :

"Tis come, the final hour,
 Th' inevitable close of Dardan power
 Hath come! we *have* been Trojans, Ilium *was*,
 And the great name of Troy; now all things pass
 To Argos. So wills angry Jupiter,
 Amid a burning town the Grecians domineer.'

I cannot say that '*we have been*,' and '*Ilium was*,' are as sonorous sounds as '*fuimus*,' and '*fuit*;' but these latter must have been as familiar to the Romans as the former to ourselves. I should much like to know if your Lordship disapproves of my translation here. I have one word to say upon ornament. It was my wish and labour that my translation should have far more of the *genuine* ornaments of Virgil than my predecessors. Dryden has been very careless of these, and profuse of his own, which seem to me very rarely to harmonise with those of Virgil; as, for example, describing Hector's appearance in the passage above alluded to,

'A bloody shroud, he seemed, and bath'd in tears.
 I wept to see the visionary man.'

Again,

'And all the wounds he for his country bore
 Now streamed afresh, and with *new purple ran*.'

I feel it, however, to be too probable that my translation is deficient in ornament, because I must unavoidably have lost many of Virgil's, and have never without reluctance attempted a compensation of my own. Had I taken the liberties of my predecessors, Dryden especially, I could have translated nine books with the labour that three have cost me. The third book, being of a humbler character than either of the former, I have treated with rather less scrupulous apprehension, and have interwoven a little of my own; and, with permission, I will send it, ere long, for the benefit of your Lordship's observations, which really will be of great service to me if I proceed. Had I begun the work

fifteen years ago, I should have finished it with pleasure ; at present, I fear it will take more time than I either can or ought to spare. I do not think of going beyond the fourth book.

As to the ms., be so kind as to forward it at your leisure to me, at Sir George Beaumont's, Coleorton Hall, near Ashby, whither I am going in about ten days. May I trouble your Lordship with our respectful compliments to Lady Lonsdale ?

Believe [me] ever

Your Lordship's faithful

And obliged friend and servant,

WM. WORDSWORTH.*

50. *Tour on the Continent, 1820.*

LETTERS TO THE EARL OF LONSDALE.

Lucerne, Aug. 19. 1820.

MY LORD,

You did me the honour of expressing a wish to hear from me during my continental tour ; accordingly, I have great pleasure in writing from this place, where we arrived three days ago. Our route has lain through Brussels, Namur, along the banks of the Meuse, to Liege ; thence to Aix-la-Chapelle, Cologne, and along the Rhine to Mayence, to Frankfort, Heidelberg (a noble situation, at the point where the Neckar issues from steep lofty hills into the plain of the Rhine), Carlsruhe, and through the Black Forest to Schaffhausen ; thence to Zürich, Berne, Thun, Interlachen. Here our Alpine tour might be said to commence, which has produced much pleasure thus far, and nothing that deserves the name of difficulty, even for the ladies. From the Valley of Lauterbrunnen we crossed the Wengern Alp to Grindelwald, and then over the grand Sheideck to Meyringen. This journey led us over high ground, and for fifteen leagues along the base of the loftiest Alps, which reared their bare or snow-clad ridges and pikes, in a clear atmosphere, with fleecy clouds now and then settling upon and gathering round them. We heard and saw several avalanches ; they are announced by a sound like thunder, but more metallic and musical. This warning naturally makes one look about, and we had the gratification of seeing one falling, in the shape and appearance of a torrent or cascade of foaming water, down the deep-worn crevices of the

* *Memoirs*, ii. 69-74.

steep or perpendicular granite mountains. Nothing can be more awful than the sound of these cataracts of ice and snow thus descending, unless it be the silence which succeeds. The elevations from which we beheld these operations of Nature, and saw such an immense range of primitive mountains stretching to the east and west, were covered with rich pasturage and beautiful flowers, among which was abundance of the monkshood, a flower which I had never seen but in the trim borders of our gardens, and which here grew not so much in patches as in little woods or forests, towering above the other plants. At this season the herdsman are with their cattle in still higher regions than those which we have trod, the herbage where we travelled being reserved till they descend in the autumn. We have visited the Abbey of Engelberg, not many leagues from the borders of the Lake of Lucerne. The tradition is, that the site of the abbey was appointed by angels, singing from a lofty mountain that rises from the plain of the valley, and which, from having been thus honoured, is called Engelberg, or the Hill of the Angels. It is a glorious position for such beings, and I should have thought myself repaid for the trouble of so long a journey by the impression made upon my mind, when I first came in view of the vale in which the convent is placed, and of the mountains that enclose it. The light of the sun had left the valley, and the deep shadows spread over it heightened the splendour of the evening light, and spread upon the surrounding mountains, some of which had their summits covered with pure snow; others were half hidden by vapours rolling round them; and the Rock of Engelberg could not have been seen under more fortunate circumstances, for masses of cloud glowing with the reflection of the rays of the setting sun were hovering round it, like choirs of spirits preparing to settle upon its venerable head.

To-day we quit this place to ascend the mountain Righi. We shall be detained in this neighbourhood till our passports are returned from Berne, signed by the Austrian minister, which we find absolutely necessary to enable us to proceed into the *Milanese*. At the end of five weeks at the latest, we hope to reach Geneva, returning by the Simplon Pass. There I might have the pleasure of hearing from your Lordship; and may I beg that you would not omit to mention our Westmoreland politics? The diet of Switzerland is now sitting in this place.

Yesterday I had a long conversation with the Bavarian envoy, whose views of the state of Europe appear to me very just. This letter must unavoidably prove dull to your Lordship, but when I have the pleasure of seeing you, I hope to make some little amends, though I feel this is a very superficial way of viewing a country, even with reference merely to the beauties of Nature. We have not met with many English ; there is scarcely a third part as many in the country as there was last year. A brother of Lord Grey is in the house where we now are, and Lord Ashburton left yesterday. I must conclude abruptly, with kindest remembrances to Lady Lonsdale and Lady Mary. Believe me, my Lord, most faithfully

Your Lordship's

WM. WORDSWORTH.

Paris, Oct. 7 [1820], 45 Rue Charlot,
Boulevards du Temple.

MY LORD,

I had the honour of writing to your Lordship from Lucerne, 19th of August, giving an account of our movements. We have visited, since, those parts of Switzerland usually deemed most worthy of notice, and the Italian lakes, having stopped four days at Milan, and as many at Geneva. With the exception of a couple of days on the Lake of Geneva, the weather has been most favourable, though frequently during the last fortnight extremely cold. We have had no detention from illness, nor any bad accident, for which we feel more grateful, on account of some of our fellow travellers, who accidentally joined us for a few days. Of these, one, an American gentleman, was drowned in the Lake of Zurich, by the upsetting of a boat in a storm, two or three days after he parted with us ; and two others, near the summit of Mount Jura, and in the middle of a tempestuous night, were precipitated, they scarcely knew how far, along with one of those frightful and ponderous vehicles, a continental diligence. We have been in Paris since Sunday last, and think of staying about a fortnight longer, as scarcely less will suffice for even a hasty view of the town and neighbourhood. We took Fontainebleau in our way, and intend giving a day to Versailles. The day we entered Paris we passed a well-drest young man and woman, dragging a harrow through a field, like cattle ; nevertheless, working in the fields on the sabbath day does not appear to

be general in France. On the same day a wretched-looking person begged of us, as the carriage was climbing a hill. Nothing could exceed his transport in receiving a pair of old pantaloons which were handed out of the carriage. This poor mendicant, the postilion told us, was an *ancien Curé*. The churches seem generally falling into decay in the country. We passed one which had been recently repaired. I have noticed, however, several young persons, men as well as women, earnestly employed in their devotions, in different churches, both in Paris and elsewhere. Nothing which I have seen in this city has interested me at all like the Jardin des Plantes, with the living animals, and the Museum of Natural History which it includes. Scarcely could I refrain from tears of admiration at the sight of this apparently boundless exhibition of the wonders of the creation. The statues and pictures of the Louvre affect me feebly in comparison. The exterior of Paris is much changed since I last visited it in 1792. I miss many ancient buildings, particularly the Temple, where the poor king and his family were so long confined. That memorable spot, where the Jacobin Club was held, has also disappeared. Nor are the additional buildings always improvements; the Pont des Arts, in particular, injures the view from the Pont Neuf greatly; but in these things public convenience is the main point.

I say nothing of public affairs, for I have little opportunity of knowing anything about them. In respect to the business of our Queen, we deem ourselves truly fortunate in having been out of the country at a time when an inquiry, at which all Europe seems scandalised, was going on.

I have purposely deferred congratulating your Lordship on the marriage of Lady Mary with Lord Frederick Bentinck, which I hear has been celebrated. My wishes for her happiness are most earnest.

With respectful compliments and congratulations to Lady Lonsdale, in which Mrs. Wordsworth begs leave to join,

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's
Obliged and faithful friend and servant,

Wm. WORDSWORTH.*

* *Memoirs*, ii. 99-104.

51. *Shakespeare's Cliff at Dover.*

How strange that the description of Dover Cliff, in *King Lear*, should ever have been supposed to have been meant for a reality! I know nothing that more forcibly shows the little reflection with which even men of sense read poetry. The cliff cannot be more than 400 feet high; and yet, 'how truly,' exclaims the historian of Dover, 'has Shakespeare described the precipice!' How much better would the historian have done, had he given us its actual elevation!*

52. *Of Affairs on the Continent, 1828.*

LETTER TO A NEPHEW.

Rydal Mount, Nov. 27. 1828.

MY DEAR C——,

It gives me much pleasure to learn that your residence in France has answered so well. As I had recommended the step, I felt more especially anxious to be informed of the result. I have only to regret that you did not tell me whether the interests of a foreign country and a brilliant metropolis had encroached more upon the time due to academical studies than was proper.

As to the revolution which Mr. D—— calculates upon, I agree with him that a great change must take place, but not altogether, or even mainly, from the causes which he looks to, if I be right in conjecturing that he expects that the religionists who have at present such influence over the king's mind will be predominant. The extremes to which they wish to carry things are not sufficiently in the spirit of the age to suit their purpose. The French monarchy must undergo a great change, or it will fall altogether. A constitution of government so disproportioned cannot endure. A monarchy, without a powerful aristocracy or nobility graduating into a gentry, and so downwards, cannot long subsist. This is wanting in France, and must continue to be wanting till the restrictions imposed on the disposal of property by will, through the Code Napoleon, are done away with: and it may be observed, by the by, that there is a bareness, some would call it a simplicity, in that code which unfits it for a com-

* *Memoirs*, ii. 116.

plex state of society like that of France, so that evasions and stretchings of its provisions are already found necessary, to a degree which will ere long convince the French people of the necessity of disencumbering themselves of it. But to return. My apprehension is, that for the cause assigned, the French monarchy may fall before an aristocracy can be raised to give it necessary support. The great monarchies of Russia, Prussia, and Austria, having not yet been subject to popular revolutions, are still able to maintain themselves, through the old feudal *forces* and qualities, with something, not much, of the feudal *virtues*. This cannot be in France; popular inclinations are much too strong—thanks, I will say so far, to the Revolution. How is a government fit for her condition to be supported, but by religion, and a spirit of honour, or refined conscience? Now religion, in a widely extended country plentifully peopled, cannot be preserved from abuse of priestly influence, and from superstition and fanaticism, nor honour be an operating principle upon a large scale, except through *property*—that is, such accumulations of it, graduated as I have mentioned above, through the community. Thus and thus only can be had exemption from temptation to low habits of mind, leisure for solid education, and dislike to innovation, from a sense in the several classes how much they have to lose; for circumstances often make men wiser, or at least more discreet, when their individual levity or presumption would dispose them to be much otherwise. To what extent that constitution of character which is produced by property makes up for the decay of chivalrous loyalty and strengthens governments, may be seen by comparing the officers of the English army with those of Prussia, &c. How far superior are ours as gentlemen! so much so that British officers can scarcely associate with those of the Continent, not from pride, but instinctive aversion to their low propensities. But I cannot proceed, and ought, my dear C—, to crave your indulgence for so long a prose.

When you see Frere, pray give him my kind regards, and say that he shall hear from me the first frank I can procure. Farewell, with kindest love from all,

Yours, very affectionately,

W. W.*

* *Memoirs*, ii. 129-131.

53. *Style : Francis Edgeworth's 'Dramatic Fragment : Criticisms.'*

I should say [to your young friend] style is in Poetry of incalculable importance. He seems, however, aware of it, for his diction is obviously studied. Now the great difficulty is to determine what constitutes a good style. In estimating this we are all subject to delusion, not improbably I am so, when it appears to me that the metaphor in the first speech of his dramatic scene is too much drawn out. It does not pass off as rapidly as metaphors ought to do, I think, in dramatic writing. I am well aware that our early dramatists abound with these continuities of imagery, but to me they appear laboured and unnatural, at least unsuited to that species of composition, of which action and motion are the essentials. 'While with the ashes of a light that was,' and the two following lines, are in the best style of dramatic writing. To every opinion thus given always add, I pray you, 'in my judgment,' though I may not, to save trouble or to avoid a charge of false modesty, express it. 'This over-pressure of a heavy pleasure,' &c., is admirable; and, indeed, it would be tedious to praise all that pleases me. Shelley's 'Witch of Atlas' I never saw; therefore the stanza referring to Narcissus and her was read by me to some disadvantage. One observation I am about to make will at least prove I am no flatterer, and will therefore give a qualified value to my praise.

'There was nought there that morn
But thrice three antient hills *alone*.'

Here the word 'alone,' being used instead of only, makes an absurdity like that noticed in the *Spectator*—'Enter a king and three fiddlers *solus*.'*

54. *Of the 'Icône Basiliké,' &c.*

LETTER TO SOUTHEY.

MY DEAR S——,

I am ashamed not to have done your message about the *Icône* to my brother.† I have no excuse, but that at

* Extract of Letter to Professor Hamilton, 12th Feb. 1829, here first printed. G.

† This refers to Dr. Wordsworth's volume on the authorship of *Icône Basiliké*. London, 1824.

that time both my body and my memory were run off their legs. I am very glad you thought the answer* appeared to you triumphant, for it had struck me as in the main point, knowledge of the subject, and spirit in the writing, and accuracy in the logic, as one of the best controversial tracts I ever had.

I am glad you have been so busy ; I wish I could say so much of myself. I have written this last month, however, about 600 verses, with tolerable success.

Many thanks for the review : your article is excellent. I only wish that you had said more of the deserts of government in respect to Ireland ; since I do sincerely believe that no government in Europe has shown better dispositions to its subjects than the English have done to the Irish, and that no country has improved so much during the same period. You have adverted to this part of the subject, but not spoken so forcibly as I could have wished. There is another point might be insisted upon more expressly than you have done—the danger, not to say the absurdity, of Roman Catholic legislation for the property of a *Protestant* church, so inadequately represented in Parliament as ours is. The Convocation is gone ; clergymen are excluded from the House of Commons ; and the Bishops are at the beck of Ministers. I boldly ask what real property of the country is so inadequately represented : it is a mere mockery.

Most affectionately yours,
W. W.†

55. *Of the Roman Catholic Question.*

LETTER TO G. HUNTRY GORDON, ESQ.

Rydal Mount, Thursday Night, Feb. 26. 1829.

You ask for my opinion on the Roman Catholic Question.

I dare scarcely trust my pen to the notice of the question which the Duke of Wellington tells us is about to be settled. One thing no rational person will deny, that the experiment is hazardous. Equally obvious is it that the timidity, supineness, and other unworthy qualities of the government for many years past have produced the danger, the extent of which they now

* This alludes to Dr. Wordsworth's second publication, entitled 'King Charles the First the Author of *Icon Basilike*.' London, 1828.

† *Memoirs*, ii. 132-3.

affirm imposes a necessity of granting all that the Romanists demand. Now, it is rather too much that the country should be called upon to take the measure of this danger from the very men who may almost be said to have created it. Danger is a relative thing, and the first requisite for judging of what we have to dread from the physical force of the Roman Catholics is to be in sympathy with the Protestants. Had our Ministers been so, could they have suffered themselves to be bearded by the Catholic Association for so many years ?

C——, if I may take leave to say it, loses sight of *things in names*, when he says that they should not be admitted as Roman Catholics, but simply as British subjects. The question before us is, Can Protestantism and Popery be coördinate powers in the constitution of a *free* country, and at the same time Christian belief be in that country a vital principle of action ?

I fear not. Heaven grant I may be deceived !

W. W.*

56. *Of the Roman Catholic Emancipation Bill.*

LETTER TO THE EARL OF LONSDALE.

Rydal Mount, Wednesday.

MY LORD,

There is one point also delicate to touch upon and hazardous to deal with, but of prime importance in this crisis. The question, as under the conduct of the present Ministers, is closely connecting itself with religion. Now after all, if we are to be preserved from utter confusion, it is religion and morals, and conscience, which must do the work. The religious part of the community, especially those attached to the Church of England, must and *do* feel that neither the Church as an establishment, nor its points of Faith as a church, nor Christianity itself as governed by Scripture, ought to be left long, if it can be prevented, in the hands which manage our affairs.

But I am running into unpardonable length. I took up the pen principally to express a hope that your Lordship may have continued to see the question in the light which affords the only

* *Memoirs*, ii. 134.

chance of preserving the nation from several generations perhaps of confusion, and crime, and wretchedness.

Excuse the liberty I have taken,
And believe me most faithfully,
Your Lordship's
Much obliged,

W. WORDSWORTH.*

57. Of Ireland and the Poor Laws, &c.

LETTER TO G. HUNTLY GORDON, ESQ.

Rydal Mount, Dec. 1. 1829.

MY DEAR SIR,

You must not go to Ireland without applying to me, as the guide-books for the most part are sorry things, and mislead by their exaggerations. If I were a younger man, and could prevail upon an able artist to accompany me, there are few things I should like better than giving a month or six weeks to explore the county of Kerry only. A judicious topographical work on that district would be really useful, both for the lovers of Nature and the observers of manners. As to the Giant's Causeway and the coast of Antrim, you cannot go wrong; there the interests obtrude themselves on every one's notice.

The subject of the Poor Laws was never out of my sight whilst I was in Ireland; it seems to me next to impossible to introduce a general system of such laws, principally for two reasons: the vast numbers that would have equal claims for relief, and the non-existence of a class capable of looking with effect to their administration. Much is done at present in many places (Derry, for example) by voluntary contributions; but the narrow-minded escape from the burthen, which falls unreasonably upon the charitable; so that assessments in the best-disposed places are to be wished for, could they be effected without producing a greater evil.

The great difficulty that is complained of in the well-managed places is the floating poor, who cannot be excluded, I am told, by any existing law from quartering themselves where they like. Open begging is not practised in many places, but there is no law by which the poor can be prevented from returning to a

* *Memoirs*, ii. 135.

place which they may have quitted voluntarily, or from which they have been expelled (as I was told). Were it not for this obstacle compulsory local regulations might, I think, be applied in many districts with good effect.

It would be unfair to myself to quit this momentous subject without adding that I am a zealous friend to the great principle of the Poor Laws, as tending, if judiciously applied, much more to elevate than to depress the character of the labouring classes. I have never seen this truth developed as it ought to be in parliament.

The day I dined with Lord F. L. Gower at his official residence in the Phoenix Park, I met there with an intelligent gentleman, Mr. Page, who was travelling in Ireland expressly to collect information upon this subject, which, no doubt, he means to publish. If you should hear of this pamphlet when it comes out procure it, for I am persuaded it will prove well worth reading. Farewell.

Faithfully yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.*

58. *Of the Earl of Lonsdale : Virgil : Book-buying : Gifts of Books : Commentaries.*

TWO LETTERS TO THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON WRANGHAM.

Rydal Mount, Feb. 19. 1819.

DEAR WRANGHAM,

I received your kind letter last night, for which you will accept my thanks. I write upon the spur of that mark of your regard, or my aversion to letter-writing might get the better of me.

I find it difficult to speak publicly of good men while alive, especially if they are persons who have power. The world ascribes the eulogy to interested motives, or to an adulatory spirit, which I detest. But of LORD LONSDALE, I will say to you, that I do not think there exists in England a man of any rank more anxiously desirous to discharge his duty in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call him. His thought and exertions are constantly directed to that object; and the more he is known the more is he beloved, and respected, and admired.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 155-6.

I ought to have thanked you before for your version of VIRGIL'S ECLOGUES, which reached me at last. I have lately compared it line for line with the original, and think it very well done. I was particularly pleased with the skill you have shown in managing the contest between the shepherds in the third Pastoral, where you have included in a succession of couplets the sense of Virgil's paired hexameters. I think I mentioned to you that these poems of Virgil have always delighted me much; there is frequently either an elegance or a happiness which no translation can hope to equal. In point of fidelity your translation is very good indeed.

You astonish me with the account of your books; and I should have been still more astonished if you had told me you had read a third (shall I say a tenth part?) of them. My reading powers were never very good, and now they are much diminished, especially by candle-light; and as to *buying* books, I can affirm that in *new* books I have not spent five shillings for the last five years, *i.e.*, in Reviews, Magazines, Pamphlets, &c. &c.; so that there would be an end of Mr. Longman, and Mr. Cadell, &c. &c., if nobody had more power or inclination to buy than myself. And as to old books, my dealings in that way, for want of means, have been very trifling. Nevertheless, small and paltry as my collection is, I have not read a fifth part of it. I should, however, like to see your army.

‘Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
When Agrican, with all his *northern* powers,
Besieged Albracca, as *romances* tell.’

Not that I accuse you of romancing; I verily believe that you have all the books you speak of. Dear Wrangham, are you and I ever like to meet in this world again? *Yours* is a *corner* of the earth; *mine* is not so. I never heard of anybody going to Bridlington; but all the world comes to the Lakes. Farewell. Excuse this wretched scrawl; it is like all that proceeds from my miserable pen.

.
Ever faithfully yours,

Wm. WORDSWORTH.

DEAR WRANGHAM,

You are very good in sending one letter after another to inquire after a person so undeserving of attentions of this kind as myself. Dr. Johnson, I think, observes, or rather is made to observe by some of his biographers, that no man delights to *give* what he is accustomed to *sell*. ‘For example: you, Mr. Thrale, would rather part with anything in this way than your porter.’ Now, though I have never been much of a salesman in matters of literature (the whole of my returns—I do not say *net profits*, but *returns*—from the writing trade, not amounting to seven score pounds), yet, somehow or other, I manufacture a letter, and part with it as reluctantly as if it were really a thing of price. But, to drop the comparison, I have so much to do with writing, in the way of labour and profession, that it is difficult to me to conceive how anybody can take up a pen but from constraint. My writing-desk is to me a place of punishment; and, as my penmanship sufficiently testifies, I always bend over it with some degree of impatience. All this is said that you may know the real cause of my silence, and not ascribe it in any degree to slight or forgetfulness on my part, or an insensibility to your worth and the value of your friendship. . . . As to my occupations, they look little at the present age; but I live in hope of leaving something behind me that by some minds will be valued.

I see no new books except by the merest accident. Of course your poem, which I should have been pleased to read, has not found its way to me. You inquire about old books: you might almost as well have asked for my teeth as for any of mine. The only *modern* books that I read are those of Travels, or such as relate to matters of fact; and the only modern books that I care for; but as to old ones, I am like yourself—scarcely anything comes amiss to me. The little time I have to spare—the very little, I may say—all goes that way. If, however, in the *line of your profession* you want any bulky old Commentaries on the Scriptures (such as not twelve strong men of these degenerate days will venture—I do not say to *read*, but to *lift*), I can, perhaps, as a special favour, accommodate you.

I and mine will be happy to see you and yours here or anywhere; but I am sorry the time you talk of is so distant: a

year and a half is a long time looking forward, though looking back ten times as much is as brief as a dream. My writing is wholly illegible—at least I fear so ; I had better, therefore, release you.

Believe me, my dear Wrangham,
Your affectionate friend,
W. WORDSWORTH.*

59. *Poems of Edward Moxon.*

LETTER TO MOXON.

(Postmark) Dec. 8. 1826.

DEAR SIR,

It is some time since I received your little volume, for which I now return you my thanks, and also for the obliging letter that accompanied it.

Your poem I have read with no inconsiderable pleasure ; it is full of natural sentiments and pleasing pictures : among the minor pieces, the last pleased me much the best, and especially the latter part of it. This little volume, with what I saw of yourself during a short interview, interest me in your welfare ; and the more so, as I always feel some apprehension for the destiny of those who in youth addict themselves to the composition of verse. It is a very seducing employment, and, though begun in disinterested love of the Muses, is too apt to connect itself with self-love, and the disquieting passions which follow in the train of that our natural infirmity. Fix your eye upon acquiring independence by honourable business, and let the Muses come after rather than go before. Such lines as the latter of this couplet,

‘ Where lovely woman, chaste as heaven above,
Shines in the golden virtues of her love,’

and many other passages in your poem, give proof of no common-place sensibility. I am therefore the more earnest that you should guard yourself against this temptation.

Excuse this freedom ; and believe me, my dear Sir, very faithfully,

Your obliged servant,
WM. WORDSWORTH.†

* *Memoirs*, ii. 205-9.

† *Ibid.* ii. 211-12.

60. *Of Hamilton's 'It haunts me yet' and Miss Hamilton's 'Boys' School.'*

LETTER TO W. R. HAMILTON, ESQ., OBSERVATORY, NEAR DUBLIN.

Rydal Mount, near Kendal, Sept. 24. 1827.

MY DEAR SIR,

You will have no pain to suffer from my sincerity. With a safe conscience I can assure you that in my judgment your verses are animated with true poetic spirit, as they are evidently the product of strong feeling. The sixth and seventh stanzas affected me much, even to the dimming of my eye and faltering of my voice while I was reading them aloud. Having said this, I have said enough; now for the *per contra*.

You will not, I am sure, be hurt, when I tell you that the workmanship (what else could be expected from so young a writer?) is not what it ought to be; even in those two affecting stanzas it is not perfect:

‘Some touch of human sympathy find way,
And whisper that though Truth's and Science' ray
With such serene effulgence o'er thee shone.’

Sympathy might whisper, but a ‘*touch of sympathy*’ could not. ‘Truth's and Science' ray,’ for the ray of truth and science, is not only extremely harsh, but a ‘ray *shone*’ is, if not absolutely a pleonasm, a great awkwardness: ‘a ray fell’ or ‘shot’ may be said, and a sun or a moon or a candle shone, but not a ray. I much regret that I did not receive these verses while you were here, that I might have given you, *vivâ voce*, a comment upon them, which would be tedious by letter, and after all very imperfect. If I have the pleasure of seeing you again, I will beg permission to dissect these verses, or any other you may be inclined to show me; but I am certain that without conference with me, or any benefit drawn from my practice in metrical composition, your own high powers of mind will lead you to the main conclusions.

You will be brought to acknowledge that the logical faculty has infinitely more to do with poetry than the young and the inexperienced, whether writer or critic, ever dreams of. Indeed, as the materials upon which that faculty is exercised in poetry

are so subtle, so plastic, so complex, the application of it requires an adroitness which can proceed from nothing but practice, a discernment which emotion is so far from bestowing that at first it is ever in the way of it. Here I must stop: only let me advert to two lines:

‘But shall despondence therefore *blench* my *brow*,
Or pining sorrow sickly ardor o’er.’

These are two of the worst lines in mere expression. ‘Blench’ is perhaps miswritten for ‘blanch;’ if not, I don’t understand the word. *Blench* signifies to flinch. If ‘blanch’ be the word, the next ought to be ‘hair.’ You cannot here use *brow* for the *hair* upon it, because a white brow or forehead is a beautiful characteristic of youth. ‘Sickly ardor o’er’ was at first reading to me unintelligible. I took ‘sickly’ to be an adjective joined with ‘ardor,’ whereas you mean it as a portion of a verb, from Shakspeare, ‘Sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought.’ But the separation of the parts or decomposition of the word, as here done, is not to be endured.

Let me now come to your sister’s verses, for which I thank you. They are surprisingly vigorous for a female pen, but occasionally too rugged, and especially for such a subject; they have also the same faults in expression as your own, but not, I think, in quite an equal degree. Much is to be hoped from feelings so strong, and from a mind thus disposed. I should have entered into particulars with these also, had I seen you after they came into my hands. Your sister is, no doubt, aware that in her poem she has trodden the same ground as Gray, in his ‘Ode upon a distant Prospect of Eton College.’ What he has been contented to treat in the abstract, she has represented in particular, and with admirable spirit. But again, my dear Sir, let me exhort you (and do you exhort your sister) to deal little with modern writers, but fix your attention almost exclusively upon those who have stood the test of time. You have not leisure to allow of your being tempted to turn aside from the right course by deceitful lights. My household desire to be remembered to you in no formal way. Seldom have I parted, never I was going to say, with one whom after so short an acquaintance, I lost sight of with more regret. I trust we shall meet again, if not [sentence cut off with the autograph]. Postscript. Pray do not forget to remember me to Mr. Otway. I

was much pleased with him and with your fellow-traveller Mr. Nimmo, as I should have been, no doubt, with the young Irishman, had not our conversation taken so serious a turn. The passage in Tacitus which Milton's line so strongly resembles is not in the 'Agricola,' nor can I find it, but it exists somewhere.

W. WORDSWORTH.*

61. *Of Collins, Dyer, Thomson, &c.*

LETTER TO REV. ALEXANDER DYCE.

Rydal Mount, Kendal, Jan. 12. 1829.

DEAR SIR,

I regret to hear of the indisposition from which you have been suffering.

That you are convinced† gives me great pleasure, as I hope that every other editor of Collins will follow your example. You are at perfect liberty to declare that you have rejected Bell's copy in consequence of my opinion of it; and I feel much satisfaction in being the instrument of rescuing the memory of Collins from this disgrace. I have always felt some concern that Mr. Home, who lived several years after Bell's publication, did not testify more regard for his deceased friend's memory by protesting against this imposition. Mr. Mackenzie is still living; and I shall shortly have his opinion upon the question; and if it be at all interesting, I shall take the liberty of sending it to you.

Dyer is another of our minor poets—minor as to quantity—of whom one would wish to know more. Particulars about him might still be collected, I should think, in South Wales, his native country, and where in early life he practised as a painter. I have often heard Sir George Beaumont express a curiosity about his pictures, and a wish to see any specimen of his pencil that might survive. If you are a rambler, perhaps you may, at some time or other, be led into Carmarthenshire, and might bear in mind what I have just said of this excellent author.

I had once a hope to have learned some unknown particulars of Thomson, about Jedburgh, but I was disappointed. Had I succeeded, I meant to publish a short life of him, prefixed to a

* *Memoirs*, ii. 212-14, with important additions from the original. G.

† i.e. convinced by what Wordsworth had remarked to me, that those portions of Collins's 'Ode on the Superstitions of the Highlanders,' which first appeared in Bell's edition of that Ode, were forgeries. A. D.

volume containing ‘The Seasons,’ ‘The Castle of Indolence,’ his minor pieces in rhyme, and a few extracts from his plays, and his ‘Liberty;’ and I feel still inclined to do something of the kind. These three writers, Thomson, Collins, and Dyer, had more poetic imagination than any of their contemporaries, unless we reckon Chatterton as of that age. I do not name Pope, for he stands alone, as a man most highly gifted ; but unluckily he took the plain when the heights were within his reach.

Excuse this long letter, and believe me,

Sincerely yours,

Wm. WORDSWORTH.*

62. *Verses and Counsels.*

LETTER TO PROFESSOR HAMILTON, OBSERVATORY,
DUBLIN.

Rydal Mount, July 24. 1829.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have been very long in your debt. An inflammation in my eyes cut me off from writing and reading, so that I deem it still prudent to employ an Amanuensis ; but I had a more decisive reason for putting off payment, nothing less than the hope that I might discharge my debt in person : it seems better, however, to consult you beforehand. I wish to make a Tour in Ireland, and *perhaps* along with my daughter, but I am ignorant of so many points, as where to begin, whether it be safe at this *rioting* period, what is best worth seeing, what mode of travelling will furnish the greatest advantages at the least expense. Dublin of course—the Wicklow mountains—Killarney Lakes—and I think the ruins not far from Limerick would be among my objects, and return by the North ; but I can form no conjecture as to the time requisite for this, and whether it would be best to take the steam-boat from Liverpool to Cork, beginning there, or to go from Whitehaven to Dublin. To start from Whitehaven by steam to Dublin would suit me as being nearer this place and a shorter voyage ; besides my son is settled near Whitehaven, and I could conveniently embark from his abode.

I have read with great pleasure the ‘Sketches in Ireland’ which Mr. Otway was kind enough to present to me ; but many

* *Memoirs*, ii. 214-16.

interesting things he speaks of in the West will be quite out of my reach. In short I am as unprepared with Tourists' information as any man can be, and sensible as I am of the very great value of your time, I cannot refrain from begging you to take pity upon my ignorance and to give me some information, keeping in mind the possibility of my having a female companion.

It is time to thank you for the verses you so obligingly sent me.

Your sister's have abundance of spirit and feeling ; all that they want is what appears in itself of little moment, and yet is of incalculably great,—that is, workmanship,—the art by which the thoughts are made to melt into each other, and to fall into light and shadow, regulated by distinct preconception of the best general effect they are capable of producing. This may seem very vague to you, but by conversation I think I could make it appear otherwise. It is enough for the present to say that I was much gratified, and beg you would thank your sister for favouring me with the sight of compositions so distinctly marked with that quality which is the subject of them ['Genius']. Your own verses are to me very interesting, and affect me much as evidences of high and pure-mindedness, from which humble-mindedness is inseparable. I like to see and think of you among the stars, and between death and immortality, where three of these poems place you. The 'Dream of Chivalry' is also interesting in another way ; but it would be insincere not to say that something of a style more terse, and a harmony more accurately balanced, must be acquired before the bodily form of your verses will be quite worthy of their living soul. You are probably aware of this, tho' perhaps not in an equal degree with myself ; nor is it desirable you should, for it might tempt you to labour, which would divert you from subjects of infinitely greater importance.

Many thanks for your interesting account of Mr. Edgeworth. I heartily concur with you in the wish that neither Plato nor any other profane author may lead him from the truths of the Gospel, without which our existence is an insupportable mystery to the thinking mind.

Looking for a reply at your early convenience,

I remain, my dear Sir, faithfully, your obliged

WM. WORDSWORTH.*

* *Memoirs*, ii. 216-17.

63. ‘*Annuals*’ and publishing Roguery.

LETTER TO G. HUNTLY GORDON, ESQ.

Rydal Mount, July 29. 1829.

MY DEAR SIR,

I hope you have enjoyed yourself in the country, as we have been doing among our shady woods, and green hills, and invigorated streams. The summer is passing on, and I have not left home, and perhaps shall not; for it is far more from duty than inclination that I quit my dear and beautiful home; and duty pulls two ways. On the one side my mind stands in need of being fed by new objects for meditation and reflection, the more so because diseased eyes have cut me off so much from reading; and, on the other hand, I am obliged to look at the expense of distant travelling, as I am not able to take so much out of my body by walking as heretofore.

I have not got my ms. back from the —,* whose managers have, between them, used me shamefully; but my complaint is principally of the editor, for with the proprietor I have had little direct connection. If you think it worth while, you shall, at some future day, see such parts of the correspondence as I have preserved. Mr. Southey is pretty much in the same predicament with them, though he has kept silence for the present. . . . I am properly served for having had any connection with such things. My only excuse is, that they offered me a very liberal sum, and that I have laboured hard through a long life, without more pecuniary emolument than a lawyer gets for two special retainers, or a public performer sometimes for two or three songs. Farewell; pray let me hear from you at your early convenience,

And believe me faithfully your

Much obliged

Wm. WORDSWORTH.†

64. *Works of George Peele.*

LETTER TO REV. ALEXANDER DYCE.

Rydal Mount, Kendal, Oct. 16. 1829.

MY DEAR SIR,

On my return from Ireland, where I have been travelling a few weeks, I found your present of George Peele’s

* An Annual, to which Wordsworth had been induced to become a contributor.

† *Memoirs*, ii. 217-18.

works, and the obliging letter accompanying it; for both of which I offer my cordial thanks.

English literature is greatly indebted to your labours; and I have much pleasure in this occasion of testifying my respect for the sound judgment and conscientious diligence with which you discharge your duty as an editor. Peele's works were well deserving of the care you have bestowed upon them; and, as I did not previously possess a copy of any part of them, the beautiful book which you have sent me was very acceptable.

By accident, I learned lately that you had made a Book of Extracts, which I had long wished for opportunity and industry to execute myself. I am happy it has fallen into so much better hands. I allude to your *Selections from the Poetry of English Ladies*. I had only a glance at your work; but I will take this opportunity of saying, that should a second edition be called for, I should be pleased with the honour of being consulted by you about it. There is one poetess to whose writings I am especially partial, the Countess of Winchelsea. I have perused her poems frequently, and should be happy to name such passages as I think most characteristic of her genius, and most fit to be selected.

I know not what to say about my intended edition of a portion of Thomson. There appears to be some indelicacy in one poet treating another in that way. The example is not good, though I think there are few to whom the process might be more advantageously applied than to Thomson. Yet, so sensible am I of the objection, that I should not have entertained the thought, but for the expectation held out to me by an acquaintance, that valuable materials for a new Life of Thomson might be procured. In this I was disappointed.

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With much respect, I remain, dear Sir,

Sincerely yours,

Wm. WORDSWORTH.*

* *Memoirs*, ii. 219-220.

65. *Of Lady Winchelsea, Tickell, &c. : Sonnets, &c.*

LETTER TO REV. ALEXANDER DYCE.

Rydal Mount, Kendal, May 10. 1830.

MY DEAR SIR,

My last was, for want of room, concluded so abruptly, that I avail myself of an opportunity of sending you a few additional words free of postage, upon the same subject.

I observed that Lady Winchelsea was unfortunate in her models—*Pindarics* and *Fables*; nor does it appear from her *Aristomenes* that she would have been more successful than her contemporaries, if she had cultivated tragedy. She had sensibility sufficient for the tender parts of dramatic writing, but in the stormy and tumultuous she would probably have failed altogether. She seems to have made it a moral and religious duty to control her feelings lest they should mislead her. Of love, as a passion, she is afraid, no doubt from a conscious inability to soften it down into friendship. I have often applied two lines of her drama (p. 318) to her affections :

‘ Love’s soft bands,
His gentle cords of hyacinths and roses,
Wove in the dewy Spring when storms are silent.’

By the by, in the next page are two impassioned lines spoken to a person fainting :

‘ Then let me hug and press thee into life,
And lend thee motion from my beating heart.’

From the style and versification of this, so much her longest work, I conjecture that Lady Winchelsea had but a slender acquaintance with the drama of the earlier part of the preceding century. Yet her style in rhyme is often admirable, chaste, tender, and vigorous, and entirely free from sparkle, antithesis, and that overculture, which reminds one, by its broad glare, its stiffness, and heaviness, of the double daisies of the garden, compared with their modest and sensitive kindred of the fields. Perhaps I am mistaken, but I think there is a good deal of resemblance in her style and versification to that of Tickell, to whom Dr. Johnson justly assigns a high place among the minor poets, and of whom Goldsmith rightly observes, that there is a strain of ballad-thinking through all his poetry, and it is very attractive. Pope, in that production of his boyhood, the ‘ Ode

to Solitude,' and in his 'Essay on Criticism,' has furnished proofs that at one period of his life he felt the charm of a sober and subdued style, which he afterwards abandoned for one that is, to my taste at least, too pointed and ambitious, and for a versification too timidly balanced.

If a second edition of your 'Specimens' should be called for, you might add from Helen Maria Williams the 'Sonnet to the Moon,' and that to 'Twilight; ' and a few more from Charlotte Smith, particularly,

'I love thee, mournful, sober-suited Night.'

At the close of a sonnet of Miss Seward are two fine verses :

'Come, that I may not hear the winds of night,
Nor count the heavy eave-drops as they fall.'

You have well characterised the poetic powers of this lady ; but, after all, her verses please me, with all their faults, better than those of Mrs. Barbauld, who, with much higher powers of mind, was spoiled as a poetess by being a dissenter, and concerned with a dissenting academy. One of the most pleasing passages in her poetry is the close of the lines upon 'Life,' written, I believe, when she was not less than eighty years of age :

'Life, we have been long together,' &c.*

You have given a specimen of that ever-to-be-pitied victim of Swift, 'Vanessa.' I have somewhere a short piece of hers upon her passion for Swift, which well deserves to be added. But I am becoming tedious, which you will ascribe to a well-meant endeavour to make you some return for your obliging attentions.

I remain, dear Sir, faithfully yours,

Wm. WORDSWORTH.†

66. *Hamilton's 'Spirit of Beauty : Verbal Criticism : Female Authorship : Words.*

Where there is so much sincerity of feeling in a matter so dignified as the renunciation of poetry for science, one feels

* It was on hearing these lines repeated by his friend, Mr. H. C. Robinson, that Wordsworth exclaimed, 'Well ! I am not given to envy other people their good things ; but I do wish I had written *that*.' He much admired Mrs. Barbauld's Essays, and sent a copy of them, with a laudatory letter upon them, to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

† *Memoirs*, ii. 220-22.

that an apology is necessary for verbal criticism. I will therefore content myself with observing that ‘joying’ for joy or joyance is not to my taste. Indeed I object to such liberties upon principle. We should soon have no language at all if the unscrupulous coinage of the present day were allowed to pass, and become a precedent for the future. One of the first duties of a Writer is to ask himself whether his thought, feeling, or image cannot be expressed by existing words or phrases, before he goes about creating new terms, even when they are justified by the analogies of the language. ‘The cataract’s steep flow’ is both harsh and inaccurate: ‘thou hast seen me bend over the cataract’ would express one idea in simplicity and all that was required. Had it been necessary to be more particular, ‘steep flow’ are not the words that ought to have been used. I remember Campbell says in a composition that is overrun with faulty language, ‘And dark as winter was the *flow* of Iser rolling rapidly;’ that is, ‘flowing rapidly.’ The expression ought to have been ‘stream’ or ‘current.’ These may appear to you frigid criticisms, but depend upon it no writings will live in which these rules are disregarded.

Female authorship is to be shunned as bringing in its train more and heavier evils than have presented themselves to your sister’s ingenuous mind. No true friend I am sure will endeavour to shake her resolution to remain in her own quiet and healthful obscurity. This is not said with a view to discourage her from writing, nor have the remarks made above any aim of the kind; they are rather intended to assist her in writing with more permanent satisfaction to herself. She will probably write less in proportion as she subjects her feelings to logical forms, but the range of her sensibilities so far from being narrowed will extend as she improves in the habit of looking at things thro’ a steady light of words; and, to speak a little metaphysically, words are not a mere vehicle, but they are powers either to kill or animate.*

* Extract of letter to Professor Hamilton, Dublin, Dec. 23d, 1829.

67. *His 'Play': Hone: Eyesight failing, &c.*

TO CHARLES LAMB, ESQ.

Jan. 10. 1830.

MY DEAR LAMB,

A whole twelvemonth have I been a letter in your debt, for which fault I have been sufficiently punished by self-reproach.

I liked your Play marvellously, having no objection to it but one, which strikes me as applicable to a large majority of plays, those of Shakspeare himself not entirely excepted—I mean a little degradation of character for a more dramatic turn of plot. Your present of Hone's book was very acceptable; and so much so, that your part of the book is the cause why I did not write long ago. I wished to enter a little minutely into notice of the dramatic extracts, and, on account of the smallness of the print, deferred doing so till longer days would allow me to read without candle-light, which I have long since given up. But, alas! when the days lengthened, my eyesight departed, and for many months I could not read three minutes at a time. You will be sorry to hear that this infirmity still hangs about me, and almost cuts me off from reading altogether. But how are you, and how is your dear sister? I long much, as we all do, to know.

For ourselves, this last year, owing to my sister's dangerous illness, the effects of which are not yet got over, has been an anxious one and melancholy. But no more of this. My sister has probably told everything about the family; so that I may conclude with less scruple, by assuring you of my sincere and faithful affection for you and your dear sister.

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

68. *Summer: Mr. Quillinan: Draining, &c.*

LETTER TO G. HUNTLY GORDON, ESQ.

Rydal Mount, April 6. 1830.

MY DEAR MR. GORDON,

You are kind in noticing with thanks my rambling notes.†

We have had here a few days of delicious summer weather.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 223.

† On a proposed tour.

It appeared with the suddenness of a pantomimic trick, stayed longer than we had a right to expect, and was as rapidly succeeded by high wind, bitter cold, and winter snow, over hill and dale.

I am not surprised that you are so well pleased with Mr. Quillinan. The more you see of him the better you will like him. You ask what are my employments. According to Dr. Johnson they are such as entitle me to high commendation, for I am not only making two blades of grass grow where only one grew before, but a dozen. In plain language, I am draining a bit of spungy ground.* In the field where this goes on I am making a green terrace that commands a beautiful view of our two lakes, Rydal and Windermere, and more than two miles of intervening vale with the stream visible by glimpses flowing through it. I shall have great pleasure in showing you this among the other returns which I hope one day to make for your kindness.

Adieu, yours,

W. W.†

69. *Works of Webster, &c.: Elder Poets: Dr. Darwin:
‘Excursion’: Collins, &c.*

LETTER TO REV. ALEXANDER DYCE.

[No date, but Postmark, 1830.]

I am truly obliged, my dear Sir, by your valuable present of Webster's Dramatic Works and the ‘Specimens.’‡ Your publisher was right in insisting upon the whole of Webster, otherwise the book might have been superseded, either by an entire edition separately given to the world, or in some *corpus* of the dramatic writers. The poetic genius of England, with the exception of Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, Dryden, Pope, and a very few more, is to be sought in her drama. How it grieves one that there is so little probability of those valuable authors being read except by the curious! I questioned my friend Charles Lamb whether it would answer for some person of real taste to undertake abridging the plays that are not likely to be read as wholes, and telling such parts of the story in brief abstract as were ill managed in the drama. He thought it would not. I, however, am inclined to think it would.

* In the field to the S.W. below the garden at Rydal.

† *Memoirs*, ii. 224.

‡ *Specimens of British Poetesses. A. D.*

The account of your indisposition gives me much concern. It pleases me, however, to see that, though you may suffer, your industry does not relax ; and I hope that your pursuits are rather friendly than injurious to your health.

You are quite correct in your notice of my obligation to Dr. Darwin.* In the first edition of the poem it was acknowledged in a note, which slipped out of its place in the last, along with some others. In putting together that edition, I was obliged to cut up several copies ; and, as several of the poems also changed their places, some confusion and omission, and, in one instance, a repetition, was the consequence. Nothing, however, so bad as in the edition of 1820, where a long poem, ‘The Lament of Mary Queen of Scots,’ was by mistake altogether omitted. Another unpleasantness arose from the same cause ; for, in some instances, notwithstanding repeated charges to the printer, you have only two Spenserian stanzas in a page (I speak now of the last edition) instead of three ; and there is the same irregularity in printing other forms of stanza.

You must indeed have been fond of that ponderous quarto, ‘The Excursion,’ to lug it about as you did.† In the edition of 1827 it was diligently revised, and the sense in several instances got into less room ; yet still it is a long poem for these feeble and fastidious times. You would honour me much by accepting a copy of my poetical works ; but I think it better to defer offering it to you till a new edition is called for, which will be ere long, as I understand the present is getting low.

A word or two about Collins. You know what importance I attach to following strictly the last copy of the text of an author ; and I do not blame you for printing in the ‘Ode to Evening’ ‘brawling’ spring ; but surely the epithet is most unsuitable to the time, the very worst, I think, that could have been chosen.

I now come to Lady Winchelsea. First, however, let me say a few words upon one or two other authoresses of your ‘Specimens.’ British poetesses make but a poor figure in the ‘Poems by Eminent Ladies.’‡ But observing how injudicious that selection is in the case of Lady Winchelsea, and of Mrs. Aphra Behn (from whose attempts they are miserably copious),

* In Mr. W.’s lines ‘To Enterprise.’ A. D.

† I had mentioned to Mr. W. that, when I had a curacy in Cornwall, I used frequently to carry ‘The Excursion’ down to the sea-shore, and read it there. A. D.

‡ Two volumes, 1755. A. D.

I have thought something better might have been chosen by more competent persons who had access to the volumes of the several writers. In selecting from Mrs. Pilkington, I regret that you omitted (look at p. 255) ‘Sorrow,’ or at least that you did not abridge it. The first and third paragraph are very affecting. See also ‘Expostulation,’ p. 258: it reminds me strongly of one of the Penitential Hymns of Burns. The few lines upon St. John the Baptist, by Mrs. Killigrew (vol. ii. p. 6), are pleasing. A beautiful Elegy of Miss Warton (sister to the poets of that name) upon the death of her father, has escaped your notice; nor can I refer you to it. Has the Duchess of Newcastle written much verse? her Life of her Lord, and the extracts in your book, and in the ‘Eminent Ladies,’ are all that I have seen of hers. The ‘Mirth and Melancholy’ has so many fine strokes of imagination, that I cannot but think there must be merit in many parts of her writings. How beautiful those lines, from ‘I dwell in groves,’ to the conclusion, ‘Yet better loved, the more that I am known,’ excepting the four verses after ‘Walk up the hills.’ And surely the latter verse of the couplet,

‘The tolling bell which for the dead rings out;
A mill where rushing waters run about;’

is very noticeable: no person could have hit upon that union of images without being possessed of true poetic feeling. Could you tell me anything of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu more than is to be learned from Pope’s letters and her own? She seems to have been destined for something much higher and better than she became. A parallel between her genius and character and that of Lady Winchelsea her contemporary (though somewhat prior to her) would be well worth drawing.

And now at last for the poems of Lady Winchelsea. I will transcribe a note from a blank leaf of my own edition, written by me before I saw the scanty notice of her in Walpole. (By the by, that book has always disappointed me when I have consulted it upon any particular occasion.) The note runs thus: ‘The “Fragment,” p. 280, seems to prove that she was attached to James II., as does p. 42, and that she suffered by the Revolution. The most celebrated of these poems, but far from the best, is “The Spleen.” “The Petition for an absolute Retreat,” and the “Nocturnal Reverie,” are of much superior merit. See also for favourable specimens, p. 156; “On the Death of

Mr. Thynne," p. 263; and p. 280, "Fragment." The Fable of "Love, Death, and Reputation," p. 29, is ingeniously told.' Thus far my own note. I will now be more particular. P. 3, 'Our Vanity,' &c., and p. 163 are noticeable as giving some account from herself of her authorship. See also p. 148, where she alludes to 'The Spleen.' She was unlucky in her models, Pindaric Odes and French Fables. But see p. 70, 'The Blindness of Elymas,' for proof that she could write with powers of a high order when her own individual character and personal feelings were not concerned. For less striking proofs of this power, see p. 4, 'All is Vanity,' omitting verses 5 and 6, and reading 'clouds that are lost and gone,' &c. There is merit in the two next stanzas; and the last stanza towards the close contains a fine reproof for the ostentation of Louis XIV., and one magnificent verse,

'Spent the astonished hours, forgetful to adore.'

But my paper is nearly out. As far as 'For my garments,' p. 36, the poem is charming; it then falls off; revives at p. 39, 'Give me there;' p. 41, &c., reminds me of Dyer's 'Grongar Hill'; it revives p. 47, towards the bottom, and concludes with sentiments worthy of the writer, though not quite so happily expressed as other parts of the poem. See pages 82, 92, 'Whilst in the Muses' paths I stray'; p. 113. 'The Cautious Lovers,' p. 118, has little poetic merit, but is worth reading as characteristic of the author. P. 143, 'Deep lines of honour,' &c., to 'maturer age.' P. 151, if shortened, would be striking; p. 154, characteristic; p. 159, from 'Meanwhile, ye living parents,' to the close, omitting 'Nor could we hope,' and the five following verses; p. 217, last paragraph; p. 259, *that* you have;* pp. 262, 263; p. 280, Was Lady W. a R. Catholic? p. 290, 'And to the clouds proclaim thy fall'; p. 291, omit 'When scatter'd glow-worms,' and the next couplet. I have no more room. Pray, excuse this vile scrawl.

Ever faithfully yours, W. W.

P.S. I have inconsiderately sent your letter to my daughter (now absent), without copying the address. I knew the letter would interest her. I shall direct to your publisher.†

Rydal Mount.

* Mr. W. means, that I *have* inserted that poem in my 'Specimens.' A. D.

† *Memoirs*, ii. 225-30.

70. *French Revolution, 1830.*

LETTERS TO G. HUNTLY GORDON, ESQ.

MY DEAR MR. GORDON,

I cannot but deeply regret that the late King of France and his ministers should have been so infatuated. Their stupidity, not to say their crimes, has given an impulse to the revolutionary and democratic spirit throughout Europe which is premature, and from which much immediate evil may be apprehended, whatever things may settle into at last. Whereas had the Government conformed to the increasing knowledge of the people, and not surrendered itself to the counsels of the priests and the bigoted Royalists, things might have been kept in an even course, to the mutual improvement and benefit of both governed and governors.

In France incompatible things are aimed at—a monarchy and democracy to be united without an intervening aristocracy to constitute a graduated scale of power and influence. I cannot conceive how an hereditary monarchy can exist without an hereditary peerage in a country so large as France, nor how either can maintain their ground if the law of the Napoleon Code, compelling equal division of property by will, be not repealed. And I understand that a vast majority of the French are decidedly adverse to the repeal of that law, which, I cannot but think, will ere long be found injurious both to France and, in its collateral effects, to the rest of Europe.

Ever, dear Mr. Gordon,

Cordially and faithfully yours,

WM. WORDSWORTH.

MY DEAR MR. GORDON,

Thanks for your hint about Rhenish: strength from wine is good, from water still better.

One is glad to see tyranny baffled and foolishness put to shame; but the French King and his ministers will be unfairly judged by all those who take not into consideration the diffi-

culties of their position. It is not to be doubted that there has long existed a determination, and that plans have been laid, to destroy the Government which the French received, as they felt, at the hands of the Allies, and their pride could not bear. Moreover, the Constitution, had it been their own choice, would by this time have lost favour in the eyes of the French, as not sufficiently democratic for the high notion *that* people entertain of their fitness to govern themselves ; but, for my own part, I'd rather fill the office of a parish beadle than sit on the throne where the Duke of Orleans has suffered himself to be placed.

The heat is gone, and but that we have too much rain again the country would be enchanting.

With a thousand thanks,

I remain ever yours,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

71. *Nonsense : Rotten Boroughs : Sonnets : Pegasus : Kenelm Digby : Tennysons.*

LETTERS TO PROFESSOR HAMILTON.

Trinity Lodge, Cambridge, November 26. 1830.

MY DEAR MR. HAMILTON,

I reached this place nine days ago, where I should have found your letter of the 23d ult., but that it had been forwarded to Coleorton Hall, Leicestershire, where we stopped a week on our road. I am truly glad to find that your good spirits put you upon writing what you call nonsense, and so much of it ; but I assure you it all passed with me for very agreeable sense, or something better, and continues to do so even in this learned spot ; which you will not be surprised to hear, when I tell you that at a dinner-party the other day, I heard a Head of a House, a clergyman also, gravely declare, that the rotten boroughs, as they are called, should instantly be abolished without compensation to their owners ; that slavery should be destroyed with like disregard of the *claims* (for rights he would allow none) of the proprietors, and a multitude of extravagances of the same sort. Therefore say I, *Vive la Bagatelle* ; motley is your only wear.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 230-1.

You tell me kindly that you have often asked yourself where is Mr. Wordsworth, and the question has readily been solved for you. He is at Cambridge : a great mistake ! So late as the 5th of November, I will tell you where I was, a solitary equestrian entering the romantic little town of Ashford in the Waters, on the edge of Wilds of Derbyshire, at the close of day, when guns were beginning to be left [let ?] off and squibs to be fired on every side. So that I thought it prudent to dismount and lead my horse through the place, and so on to Bakewell, two miles farther. You must know how I happened to be riding through these wild regions. It was my wish that Dora should have the benefit of her pony while at Cambridge, and very valiantly and economically I determined, unused as I am to horsemanship, to ride the creature myself. I sent James with it to Lancaster ; there mounted ; stopped a day at Manchester, a week at Coleorton, and so reached the end of my journey safe and sound, not, however, without encountering two days of tempestuous rain. Thirty-seven miles did I ride in one day through the worse of these storms. And what was my resource ? guess again : writing verses to the memory of my departed friend Sir George Beaumont, whose house I had left the day before. While buffetting the other storm I composed a Sonnet upon the splendid domain at Chatsworth, which I had seen in the morning, as contrasted with the secluded habitations of the narrow dells in the Park ; and as I passed through the tame and manufacture-disfigured country of Lancashire I was reminded by the faded leaves, of Spring, and threw off a few stanzas of an ode to May.

But too much of self and my own performances upon my steed—a descendant no doubt of Pegasus, though his owner and present rider knew nothing of it. Now for a word about Professor Airey. I have seen him twice ; but I did not communicate your message. It was at dinner and at an evening party, and I thought it best not to speak of it till I saw him, which I mean to do, upon a morning call.

There is a great deal of intellectual activity within the walls of this College, and in the University at large ; but conversation turns mainly upon the state of the country and the late change in the administration. The fires have extended to within 8 miles of this place ; from which I saw one of the worst, if not

absolutely the worst, indicated by a redness in the sky—a few nights ago.

I am glad when I fall in with a member of Parliament, as it puts me upon writing to my friends, which I am always disposed to defer, without such a determining advantage. At present we have two members, Mr. Cavendish, one of the representatives of the University, and Lord Morpeth, under the Master's roof. We have also here Lady Blanche, wife of Mr. Cavendish, and sister of Lord Morpeth. She is a great admirer of Mrs. Hemans' poetry. There is an interesting person in this University for a day or two, whom I have not yet seen—Kenelm Digby, author of the 'Broadstone of Honor,' a book of chivalry, which I think was put into your hands at Rydal Mount. We have also a respectable show of blossom in poetry. Two brothers of the name of Tennyson, in particular, are not a little promising. Of science I can give you no account; though perhaps I may pick up something for a future letter, which may be long in coming for reasons before mentioned. Mrs. W. and my daughter, of whom you inquire, are both well; the latter rides as often as weather and regard for the age of her pony will allow. She has resumed her German labours, and is not easily drawn from what she takes to. Therefore I hope Miss Hamilton will not find fault if she does not write for some time, as she will readily conceive that with this passion upon her, and many engagements, she will be rather averse to writing. In fact she owes a long letter to her brother in Germany, who, by the bye, tells us that he will not cease to look out for the Book of Kant you wished for. Farewell, with a thousand kind remembrances to yourself and sister, and the rest of your amiable family, in which Mrs. W. and Dora join.

Believe me most faithfully yours,
Wm. WORDSWORTH.*

72. Verses : 'Reform Bill:' Francis Edgeworth : *Eagles :*
'Yarrow Revisited.'

Rydal Mount, Oct. 27 [1831].

MY DEAR MR. HAMILTON,

A day or two before my return from Scotland arrived your letter and verses; for both of which I thank you, as they

* Here first printed. G.

exhibit your mind under those varied phases which I have great pleasure in contemplating. My reply is earlier than it would have been, but for the opportunity of a frank from one of the Members for the University of Oxford—a friend of Mr. Southey's and mine, who by way of recreating himself after the fatigues of the last Session, had taken a trip to see the Manchester railway, and kindly and most unexpectedly came on to give a day apiece to Southey and me. He is, like myself, in poor heart at the aspect of public affairs. In his opinion the Ministers when they brought in the Bill neither expected nor wished it to be carried. All they wanted was an opportunity of saying to the people, ‘Behold what great things we would have done for you had it been in our power: we must now content ourselves with the best we can get.’ But, to return to your letter. To speak frankly, you appear to be at least three-fourths gone in love; therefore, think about the last quarter in the journey. The picture you give of the lady makes one wish to see her more familiarly than I had an opportunity of doing, were it only to ascertain whether, as you astronomers have in your observatories magnifying glasses for the stars, you do not carry about with you also, when you descend to common life, coloured glasses and Claude Loraine mirrors for throwing upon objects that interest you enough for the purpose, such lights and hues as may be most to the taste of the intellectual vision. In a former letter you mention Francis Edgeworth. He is a person not to be forgotten. If you be in communication with him pray present him my very kind respects, and say that he was not unfrequently in my thoughts during my late poetic rambles; and particularly when I saw the objects which called forth a Sonnet that I shall send you. He was struck with my mention of a sound in the eagle's notes, much and frequently resembling the yelping and barking of a dog, and quoted a passage in Eschylus where the eagle is called the flying hound of the air, and he suggested that Eschylus might not only allude by that term to his being a bird of chase or prey, but also to this barking voice, which I do not recollect ever hearing noticed. The other day I was forcibly reminded of the circumstances under which the pair of eagles were seen that I described in the letter to Mr. Edgeworth, his brother. It was the promontory of Fairhead, on the coast of Antrim, and no spectacle could be grander. At Dally Castle, a ruin seated at the tip

of one of the horns of the bay of Oban, I saw the other day one of these noble creatures cooped up among the ruins, and was incited to give vent to my feelings as you shall now see :

'Dishonoured Rock and Ruin ! that by law
Tyrannic, keep the Bird of Jove imbarred,
Like a lone criminal whose life is spared.
Vexed is he and screams loud :—The last I saw
Was on the wing, and struck my soul with awe,
Now wheeling low, then with a consort paired,
From a bold headland their loved aery's guard,
Flying, above Atlantic waves,—to draw
Light from the fountain of the setting sun.
Such was this prisoner once ; and, when his plumes
The sea-blast ruffles as the storm comes on,
In spirit, for a moment he resumes
His rank 'mong free-born creatures that live free ;
His power, his beauty, and his majesty.'

You will naturally wish to hear something of Sir Walter Scott, and particularly of his health. I found him a good deal changed within the last three or four years, in consequence of some shocks of the apoplectic kind ; but his friends say that he is very much better, and the last accounts, up to the time of his going on board, were still more favourable. He himself thinks his age much against him, but he has only completed his 60th year. But a friend of mine was here the other day, who has rallied, and is himself again, after a much severer shock, and at an age several years more advanced. So that I trust the world and his friends may be hopeful, with good reason, that the life and faculties of this man, who has during the last six and twenty years diffused more innocent pleasure than ever fell to the lot of any human being to do in his own life-time, may be spared. Voltaire, no doubt, was full as extensively known, and filled a larger space probably in the eye of Europe ; for he was a great theatrical writer, which Scott has not proved himself to be, and miscellaneous to that degree, that there was something for all classes of readers : but the pleasure afforded by his writings, with the exception of some of his Tragedies and minor Poems, was not pure, and in this Scott is greatly his superior.

As Dora has told your sister, Sir W. was our guide to Yarrow. The pleasure of that day induced me to add a third to the two poems upon Yarrow, 'Yarrow Revisited.' It is in the same measure, and as much in the same spirit as matter of fact

would allow. You are artist enough to know that it is next to impossible entirely to harmonise things that rest upon their poetic credibility, and are idealised by distance of time and space, with those that rest upon the evidence of the hour, and have about them the thorny points of actual life. I am interrupted by a stranger, and a gleam of fine weather reminds me also of taking advantage of it the moment I am at liberty, for we have had a week of incessant rain.

[Ever faithfully yours,
W.M. WORDSWORTH.] *

73. *Tour in Scotland.*

LETTER TO LADY FREDERICK BENTINCK.

Rydal Mount, Nov. 9.

MY DEAR LADY FREDERICK,

You are quite right, dear Lady F., in congratulating me on my late ramble in Scotland. I set off with a severe inflammation in one of my eyes, which was removed by being so much in the open air; and for more than a month I scarcely saw a newspaper, or heard of their contents. During this time we almost forgot, my daughter and I, the deplorable state of the country. My spirits rallied, and, with exercise—for I often walked scarcely less than twenty miles a day—and the employment of composing verses, amid scenery the most beautiful, and at a season when the foliage was most rich and varied, the time flew away delightfully; and when we came back into the world again, it seemed as if I had waked from a dream, that never was to return. We travelled in an open carriage with one horse, driven by Dora; and while we were in the Highlands I walked most of the way by the side of the carriage, which left us leisure to observe the beautiful appearances. The rainbows and coloured mists floating about the hills were more like enchantment than anything I ever saw, even among the Alps. There was in particular, the day we made the tour of Loch Lomond in the steam-boat, a fragment of a rainbow, so broad, so splendid, so glorious, with its reflection in the calm water, it astonished every one on board, a

* *Memoirs*, ii. 241-2. Given completely (instead of the brief extract) from the original. The autograph, &c. cut away. G.

party of foreigners especially, who could not refrain from expressing their pleasure in a more lively manner than we are accustomed to do. My object in going to Scotland so late in the season was to see Sir Walter Scott before his departure. We stayed with him three days, and he quitted Abbotsford the day after we left it. His health has undoubtedly been much shattered, by successive shocks of apoplexy, but his friends say he is so much recovered, that they entertain good hopes of his life and faculties being spared. Mr. Lockhart tells me that he derived benefit by a change of his treatment made by his London physicians, and that he embarked in good spirits.

As to public affairs, I have no hope but in the goodness of Almighty God. The Lords have recovered much of the credit they had lost by their conduct in the Roman Catholic question. As an Englishman I am deeply grateful for the stand which they have made, but I cannot help fearing that they may be seduced or intimidated. Our misfortune is, that the dis approvers of this monstrous bill give way to a belief that nothing can prevent its being passed ; and therefore they submit.

As to the cholera, I cannot say it appals me much ; it may be in the order of Providence to employ this scourge for bringing the nation to its senses ; though history tells us in the case of the plague at Athens, and other like visitations, that men are never so wicked and depraved as when afflictions of that kind are upon them. So that, after all, one must come round to our only support, submission to the will of God, and faith in the ultimate goodness of His dispensations.

I am sorry you did not mention your son, in whose health and welfare, and progress in his studies, I am always much interested. Pray remember me kindly to Lady Caroline. All here join with me in presenting their kindest remembrances to yourself ; and believe me, dear Lady Frederick,

Faithfully and affectionately yours,

Wm. WORDSWORTH.*

* *Memoirs*, ii. 242-4.

74. *Sir Walter Scott.*

EXTRACT OF LETTER TO MRS. HEMANS.

Rydal Mount, Aug. 20. 1833.

The visit which occasioned the poem ['Yarrow Revisited'] addressed to Sir Walter Scott, that you mention in terms so flattering, was a very melancholy one. My daughter was with me. We arrived at his house on Monday noon, and left it at the same time on Thursday, the very day before he quitted Abbotsford for London, on his way to Naples. On the morning of our departure he composed a few lines for Dora's Album, and wrote them in it. We prize this memorial very much, and the more so as an affecting testimony of his regard at a time when, as the verses prove, his health of body and powers of mind were much impaired and shaken. You will recollect the little green book which you were kind enough to write in on its first page.

Let me hope that your health will improve, so that you may be enabled to proceed with the sacred poetry with which you are engaged. Be assured that I shall duly appreciate the mark of honour you design for me in connection with so interesting a work.*

75. *Of Advices that he would write more in Prose.*

LETTER TO REV. J. K. MILLER, VICAR OF WALKERINGHAM.

Rydal Mount, Kendal, Dec. 17. 1831.

MY DEAR SIR,

You have imputed my silence, I trust, to some cause neither disagreeable to yourself nor unworthy of me. Your letter of the 26th of Nov. had been misdirected to Penrith, where the postmaster detained it some time, expecting probably that I should come to that place, which I have often occasion to visit. When it reached me I was engaged in assisting my wife to make out some of my mangled and almost illegible MSS., which inevitably involved me in endeavours to correct and improve them. My eyes are subject to frequent inflammations, of which I had an attack (and am still suffering from it) while that was going on. You would nevertheless have heard from me almost as soon as I received your letter, could I have replied to

* *Memoirs*, ii. 244.

it in terms in any degree accordant to my wishes. Your exhortations troubled me in a way you cannot be in the least aware of; for I have been repeatedly urged by some of my most valued friends, and at times by my own conscience, to undertake the task you have set before me. But I will deal frankly with you. A conviction of my incompetence to do justice to the momentous subject has kept me, and I fear will keep me, silent. My sixty-second year will soon be completed, and though I have been favoured thus far in health and strength beyond most men of my age, yet I feel its effects upon my spirits; they sink under a pressure of apprehension to which, at an earlier period of my life, they would probably have been superior. There is yet another obstacle: I am no ready master of prose writing, having been little practised in the art. This last consideration will not weigh with you; nor would it have done with myself a few years ago; but the bare mention of it will serve to show that years have deprived me of *courage*, in the sense the word bears when applied by Chaucer to the animation of birds in spring time.

What I have already said precludes the necessity of otherwise confirming your assumption that I am opposed to the spirit you so justly characterise.* To your opinions upon this subject, my judgment (if I may borrow your own word) ‘responds.’ Providence is now trying this empire through her political institutions. Sound minds find their expediency in principles; unsound, their principles in expediency. On the proportion of these minds to each other the issue depends. From calculations of partial expediency in opposition to general principles, whether those calculations be governed by fear or presumption, nothing but mischief is to be looked for; but, in the present stage of our affairs, the class that does the most harm consists of *well-intentioned* men, who, being ignorant of human nature, think that they may help the thorough-paced reformers and revolutionists to a *certain* point, then stop, and that the machine will stop with them. After all, the question is, fundamentally, one of piety and morals; of piety, as disposing men who are anxious for social improvement to wait patiently for God’s good time; and of morals, as guarding them from doing evil that good may come, or thinking that any ends *can* be so good as to justify

* As revolutionary.

wrong means for attaining them. In fact, means, in the concerns of this life, are infinitely more important than ends, which are to be valued mainly according to the qualities and virtues requisite for their attainment; and the best test of an end being good is the purity of the means, which, by the laws of God and our nature, must be employed in order to secure it. Even the interests of eternity become distorted the moment they are looked at through the medium of impure means. Scarcely had I written this, when I was told by a person in the Treasury, that it is intended to carry the Reform Bill by a new creation of peers. If this be done, the constitution of England will be destroyed, and the present Lord Chancellor, after having contributed to murder it, may consistently enough pronounce, in his place, its *éloge funèbre*!

I turn with pleasure to the sonnets you have addressed to me, and if I did not read them with unqualified satisfaction it was only from consciousness that I was unworthy of the encomiums they bestowed upon me.

Among the papers I have lately been arranging are passages that would prove as forcibly as anything of mine that has been published, you were not mistaken in your supposition that it is the habit of my mind inseparably to connect loftiness of imagination with that humility of mind which is best taught in Scripture.

Hoping that you will be indulgent to my silence, which has been, from various causes, protracted contrary to my wish,

Believe me to be, dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

76. *Of Poetry and Prose: Milton and Shakspeare: Reform, &c.*

LETTER TO PROFESSOR HAMILTON, DUBLIN.

Nov. 22. 1831.

MY DEAR MR. HAMILTON,

You send me showers of verses, which I receive with much pleasure, as do we all; yet have we fears that this employment may seduce you from the path of Science, which you seem destined to tread with so much honour to yourself and profit to others. Again and again I must repeat, that the composition

* *Memoirs*, ii. 252-4.

of verse is infinitely more of an art than men are prepared to believe ; and absolute success in it depends upon innumerable minutiae, which it grieves me you should stoop to acquire a knowledge of. Milton talks of ‘ pouring easy his unpremeditated verse.’ It would be harsh, untrue, and odious, to say there is anything like cant in this ; but it is not true to the letter, and tends to mislead. I could point out to you five hundred passages in Milton upon which labour has been bestowed, and twice five hundred more to which additional labour would have been serviceable. Not that I regret the absence of such labour, because no poem contains more proofs of skill acquired by practice. These observations are not called out by any defects or imperfections in your last pieces especially : they are equal to the former ones in effect, have many beauties, and are not inferior in execution ; but again I do venture to submit to your consideration, whether the poetical parts of your nature would not find a field more favourable to their exercise in the regions of prose : not because those regions are humbler, but because they may be gracefully and profitably trod with footsteps less careful and in measures less elaborate. And now I have done with the subject, and have only to add, that when you write verses you would not fail, from time to time, to let me have a sight of them ; provided you will allow me to defer criticism on your diction and versification till we meet. My eyes are so often useless both for reading and writing, that I cannot tax the eyes and pens of others with writing down observations which to indifferent persons must be tedious.

Upon the whole, I am not sorry that your project of going to London at present is dropped. It would have grieved me had you been unfurnished with an introduction from me to Mr. Coleridge ; yet I know not how I could have given you one—he is often so very unwell. A few weeks ago he had had two attacks of cholera, and appears to be so much broken down that unless I were assured he was something in his better way I could not disturb him by the introduction of any one. His most intimate friend is Mr. Green, a man of science and a distinguished surgeon. If to him you could procure an introduction he would let you know the state of Coleridge’s health ; and to Mr. Green, whom I once saw, you might use my name with a view to further your wish, if it were at all needful.

Shakspeare's sonnets (excuse this leap) are not upon the Italian model, which Milton's are ; they are merely quatrains with a couplet tacked to the end ; and if they depended much upon the versification they would unavoidably be heavy.

One word upon Reform in Parliament, a subject to which, somewhat reluctantly, you allude. You are a Reformer ! Are you an approver of the Bill as rejected by the Lords ? or, to use Lord Grey's words, anything 'as efficient?'—he means, if he means anything, for producing change. Then I earnestly entreat you to devote hours and hours to the study of human nature, in books, in life, and in your own mind ; and beg and pray that you would mix with society, not in Ireland and Scotland only, but in England ; a fount of destiny which, if once poisoned, away goes all hope of quiet progress in well doing. The constitution of England, which seems about to be destroyed, offers to my mind the sublimest contemplation which the history of society and government have ever presented to it ; and for this cause especially, that its principles have the character of pre-conceived ideas, archetypes of the pure intellect, while they are, in fact, the results of a humble-minded experience. Think about this, apply it to what we are threatened with, and farewell.

WM. WORDSWORTH.*

77. *Of the Reform Bill.*

EXTRACT OF LETTER TO LORD LONSDALE.

Rydal Mount, Feb. 17. 1832.

MY LORD,

• • • • • • • • •

If, after all, I should be asked how I would myself vote, if it had been my fortune to have a seat in the House of Lords, I must say that I should oppose the second reading, though with my eyes open to the great hazard of doing so. My support, however, would be found in standing by a great principle; for, without being unbecomingly personal, I may state to your Lordship, that it has ever been the habit of my mind to trust that expediency will come out of fidelity to principles, rather than to seek my principles of action in calculations of expediency.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 255-7, with important additions from the original. G.

With this observation I conclude, trusting your Lordship will excuse my having detained you so long.

I have the honour to be, most faithfully,

Your much obliged,

W^M. WORDSWORTH.*

78. *Of Political Affairs.*

EXTRACT OF LETTER TO LADY FREDERICK BENTINCK.

You were not mistaken in supposing that the state of public affairs has troubled me much. I cannot see how the government is to be carried on, but by such sacrifices to the democracy as will, sooner or later, upset everything. Whoever governs, it will be by out-bidding for popular favour those who went before them. Sir Robert Peel was obliged to give way in his government to the spirit of Reform, as it is falsely called ; these men are going beyond him ; and if ever he shall come back, it will only, I fear, be to carry on the movement, in a shape somewhat less objectionable than it will take from the Whigs. In the mean while the Radicals or Republicans are cunningly content to have this work done ostensibly by the Whigs, while in fact they themselves are the Whigs' masters, as the Whigs well know ; but they hope to be preserved from destruction by throwing themselves back upon the Tories when measures shall be urged upon them by their masters which they may think too desperate. What I am most afraid of is, alterations in the constituency, and in the duration of Parliament, which will bring it more and more under the dominion of the lower and lowest classes. On this account I fear the proposed Corporation Reform, as a step towards household suffrage, vote by ballot, &c. As to a union of the Tories and Whigs in Parliament, I see no prospect of it whatever. To the great Whig lords may be truly applied the expression in *Macbeth*,

‘They have eaten of the insane root
That takes the reason prisoner.’

I ordered two copies of my new volume to be sent to Cottesmore. And now farewell ; and believe me,

Dear Lady Frederick, ever faithfully yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.†

* *Memoirs*, ii. 257.

† *Ibid.* ii. 258-9.

79. *Family Affliction and State of Public Affairs.*

LETTER TO THE REV. DR. WORDSWORTH.

Rydal Mount, April 1. 1832.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Our dear sister makes no progress towards recovery of strength. She is very feeble, never quits her room, and passes most of the day in, or upon, the bed. She does not suffer much pain, and is very cheerful, and nothing troubles her but public affairs and the sense of requiring so much attention. Whatever may be the close of this illness, it will be a profound consolation to you, my dear brother, and to us all, that it is borne with perfect resignation; and that her thoughts are such as the good and pious would wish. She reads much, both religious and miscellaneous works.

If you see Mr. Watson, remember me affectionately to him.

I was so distressed with the aspect of public affairs, that were it not for our dear sister's illness, I should think of nothing else. They are to be envied, I think, who, from age or infirmity, are likely to be removed from the afflictions which God is preparing for this sinful nation. God bless you, my brother. John says you are well; so am I, and every one here except our sister: but I have witnessed one revolution in a foreign country, and I have not courage to think of facing another in my own. Farewell. God bless you again.

Your affectionate Brother,

W. W.*

80. *Illness of Sister: Reform: Poems: Oxford and Cambridge, &c.*

LETTER TO PROFESSOR HAMILTON, DUBLIN.

Moresby, June 25. 1832.

MY DEAR MR. HAMILTON,

Your former letter reached me in due time; your second, from Cambridge, two or three days ago. I ought to have written to you long since, but really I have for some time, from private and public causes of sorrow and apprehension, been in a great measure deprived of those genial feelings which, thro'

* *Mémoirs*, ii. 259-60.

life, have not been so much accompaniments of my character, as vital principles of my existence.

My dear sister has been languishing more than seven months in a sick-room, nor dare I or any of her friends entertain a hope that her strength will ever be restored ; and the course of public affairs, as I think I told you before, threatens, in my view, destruction to the institutions of the country ; an event which, whatever may rise out of it hereafter, cannot but produce distress and misery for two or three generations at least. In any times I am but at best a poor and unpunctual correspondent, yet I am pretty sure you would have heard from me but for this reason ; therefore let the statement pass for an apology as far as you think fit.

The verses called forth by your love and the disappointment that followed I have read with much pleasure, tho' grieved that you should have suffered so much ; as poetry they derive an interest from your philosophical pursuits, which could not but recommend the verses even to indifferent readers, and must give them in the eyes of your friends a great charm. The style appears to me good, and the general flow of the versification harmonious ; but you deal somewhat more in dactylic endings and identical terminations than I am accustomed to think legitimate. Sincerely do I congratulate you upon being able to continue your philosophical pursuits under such a pressure of personal feeling.

It gives me much pleasure that you and Coleridge have met, and that you were not disappointed in the conversation of a man from whose writings you had previously drawn so much delight and improvement. He and my beloved sister are the two beings to whom my intellect is most indebted, and they are now proceeding, as it were, *pari passu*, along the path of sickness, I will not say towards the grave, but I trust towards a blessed immortality.

It was not my intention to write so seriously : my heart is full, and you must excuse it.

You do not tell me how you like Cambridge as a place, nor what you thought of its buildings and other works of art. Did you not see Oxford as well ? Surely you would not lose the opportunity ; it has greatly the advantage over Cambridge in

its happy intermixture of streets, churches, and collegiate buildings.

I hope you found time when in London to visit the British Museum.

A fortnight ago I came hither to my son and daughter, who are living a gentle, happy, quiet, and useful life together. My daughter Dora is also with us. On this day I should have returned, but an inflammation in my eyes makes it unsafe for me to venture in an open carriage, the weather being exceedingly disturbed.

A week ago appeared here Mr. W. S. Landor, the Poet, and author of the *Imaginary Conversations*, which probably have fallen in your way. We had never met before, tho' several letters had passed between us; and as I had not heard that he was in England, my gratification in seeing him was heightened by surprise. We passed a day together at the house of my friend Mr. Rawson, on the banks of Wastwater. His conversation is lively and original; his learning great, tho' he will not allow it, and his laugh the heartiest I have heard of a long time. It is not much less than twenty years since he left England for France, and afterwards Italy, where he hopes to end his days, nay [he has] fixed near Florence upon the spot where he wishes to be buried. Remember me most kindly to your sisters. Dora begs her love and thanks to your sister Eliza for her last most interesting letter, which she will answer when she can command a frank.

Ever faithfully yours,

Wm. WORDSWORTH.*

[Postscript added on first page:] I have desired Messrs. Longman to put aside for you a copy of the new edition of my poems, compressed into four vols. It contains nothing but what has before seen the light, but several poems which were not in the last. Pray direct your Dublin publisher to apply for it.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 260, with important additions from the original. G.

81. ‘*Remains of Lucretia Davidson:*’ *Public Events:*
Miss Jewsbury, &c.

LETTER TO MRS. HEMANS.

Rydal Mount, Nov. 22 [1832].

DEAR MRS. HEMANS,

I will not render this sheet more valueless than at best it will prove, by tedious apologies for not answering your very kind and welcome letter long and long ago. I received it in London, when my mind was in a most uneasy state, and when my eyes were useless both for writing and reading, so that an immediate reply was out of my power; and, since, I have been doubtful where to address you. Accept this, and something better, as my excuse, that I have very often thought of you with kindness and good wishes for your welfare, and that of your fine boys, who must recommend themselves to all that come in their way. Let me thank you in Dora’s name for your present of *The Remains of Lucretia Davidson*, a very extraordinary young creature, of whom I had before read some account in Mr. Southey’s review of this volume. Surely many things, not often bestowed, must concur to make genius an enviable gift. This truth is painfully forced upon one’s attention in reading the effusions and story of this enthusiast, hurried to her grave so early. You have, I understand, been a good deal in Dublin. The place I hope has less of the fever of intellectual, or rather literary, ambition than Edinburgh, and is less disquieted by factions and cabals of persons. As to those of parties they must be odious and dreadful enough; but since they have more to do with religion, the adherents of the different creeds perhaps mingle little together, and so the mischief to social intercourse, though great, will be somewhat less.

I am not sure but that Miss Jewsbury has judged well in her determination of going to India. Europe is at present a melancholy spectacle, and these two Islands are likely to reap the fruit of their own folly and madness, in becoming, for the present generation, the two most unquiet and miserable spots upon the earth. May you, my dear friend, find the advantage of the poetic spirit in raising you, in thought at least, above the contentious clouds! Never before did I feel such reason to be grateful for what little inspiration heaven has graciously be-

stowed upon my humble intellect. What you kindly wrote upon the interest you took during your travels in my verses, could not but be grateful to me, because your own show that in a rare degree you understand and sympathise with me. We are all well, God be thanked. I am a wretched correspondent, as this scrawl abundantly shows. I know also, that you have far too much, both of receiving and writing letters, but I cannot conclude without expressing a wish, that from time to time you would let us hear from you and yours, and how you prosper. All join with me in kindest remembrance to yourself and your boys, especially to Charles, of whom we know most. Believe me, dear Mrs. Hemans, not the less for my long silence,

Faithfully and affectionately yours,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

82. *Tuition at the University.*

LETTER TO A NEPHEW.

Rydal Mount, June 17. 1833.

MY DEAR C——,

You are welcome to England after your long ramble. I know not what to say in answer to your wish for my opinion upon the offer of the lectureship.

I have only one observation to make, to which I should attach importance if I thought it called for in your case, which I do not. I mean the moral duty of avoiding to encumber yourself with private pupils in any number. You are at an age when the blossoms of the mind are setting, to make fruit; and the practice of *pupil-mongering* is an absolute blight for this process. Whatever determination you come to, may God grant that it proves for your benefit: this prayer I utter with earnestness, being deeply interested, my dear C——, in all that concerns you. I have said nothing of the uncertainty hanging over all the establishments, especially the religious and literary ones of the country, because if they are to be overturned, the calamity would be so widely spread, that every mode of life would be involved in it, and nothing survive for hopeful calculation.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 261-2.

We are always delighted to hear of any or all of you. God bless you, my dear C—.

Most faithfully, your affectionate,
W. WORDSWORTH.*

83. *On the Admission of Dissenters to graduate in the University of Cambridge.*

May 15. 1834.

MY DEAR C—,

You will wonder what is become of us, and I am afraid you will think me very unworthy the trouble you took in writing to us and sending your pamphlet. A thousand little things have occurred to prevent my calling upon Mrs. Wordsworth, who is ever ready to write for me, in respect to the question that you have so ably handled. Since the night when the Reform Bill was first introduced, I have been convinced that the institutions of the country cannot be preserved. . . . It is a mere question of time. A great majority of the present parliament, I believe, are in the main favourable to the preservation of the Church, but among these many are ignorant how that is to be done. Add to the portion of those who with good intentions are in the dark, the number who will be driven or tempted to vote against their consciences by the clamour of their sectarian and infidel constituents under the Reform Bill, and you will have a daily augmenting power even in this parliament, which will be more and more hostile to the Church every week and every day. You will see from the course which my letter thus far has taken, that I regard the prayer of the Petitioners to whom you are opposed as formidable still more from the effect which, if granted, it will ultimately have upon the Church, and through that medium upon the Monarchy and upon social order, than for its immediate tendency to introduce discord in the universities, and all those deplorable consequences which you have so feelingly painted as preparatory to their destruction.

I am not yet able to use my eyes for reading or writing, but your pamphlet has been twice read to me. . . .

God bless you. . . .

Affectionately yours,

WM. WORDSWORTH.†

* *Memoirs*, ii. 263-4.

† *Ibid.* ii. 267-8.

84. *The Poems of Skelton.*

LETTER TO THE REV. ALEXANDER DYCE.

Rydal Mount, Kendal, Jan. 7. 1833.

MY DEAR SIR,

Having an opportunity of sending this to town free of postage, I write to thank you for your last obliging letter. Sincerely do I congratulate you upon having made such progress with Skelton, a writer deserving of far greater attention than his works have hitherto received. Your edition will be very serviceable, and may be the occasion of calling out illustrations, perhaps, of particular passages from others, beyond what your own reading, though so extensive, has supplied. I am pleased also to hear that 'Shirley' is out.

I lament to hear that your health is not good. My own, God be thanked, is excellent; but I am much dejected with the aspect of public affairs, and cannot but fear that this nation is on the brink of great troubles.

Be assured that I shall at all times be happy to hear of your studies and pursuits, being, with great respect,

Sincerely yours,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

85. *The Works of James Shirley.*

LETTER TO THE REV. ALEXANDER DYCE.

Rydal Mount, March 20. 1833.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have to thank you for the very valuable present of Shirley's works, just received. The preface is all that I have yet had time to read. It pleased me to find that you sympathised with me in admiration of the passage from the Duchess of Newcastle's poetry; and you will be gratified to be told that I have the opinion you have expressed of that cold and false-hearted Frenchified coxcomb, Horace Walpole.

Poor Shirley! what a melancholy end was his! and then to be so treated by Dryden! One would almost suspect some private cause of dislike, such as is said to have influenced Swift in regard to Dryden himself.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 274-5.

Shirley's death reminded me of a sad close of the life of a literary person, Sanderson by name, in the neighbouring county of Cumberland. He lived in a cottage by himself, though a man of some landed estate. His cottage, from want of care on his part, took fire in the night. The neighbours were alarmed ; they ran to his rescue ; he escaped, dreadfully burned, from the flames, and lay down (he was in his seventieth year) much exhausted under a tree, a few yards from the door. His friends, in the meanwhile, endeavoured to save what they could of his property from the flames. He inquired most anxiously after a box in which his manuscripts and published pieces had been deposited with a view to a publication of a laboriously-corrected edition ; and, upon being told that the box was consumed, he expired in a few minutes, saying, or rather sighing out the words, 'Then I do not wish to live.' Poor man ! though the circulation of his works had not extended beyond a circle of fifty miles' diameter, perhaps, at furthest, he was most anxious to survive in the memory of the few who were likely to hear of him.

The publishing trade, I understand, continues to be much depressed, and authors are driven to solicit or invite subscriptions, as being in many cases the only means for giving their works to the world.

I am always pleased to hear from you ; and believe me,

My dear Sir,

Faithfully your obliged friend,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

86. *Literary Criticism and News : Men of Science, &c.*

LETTER TO PROFESSOR HAMILTON, OF DUBLIN.

Rydal Mount, May 8. 1833.

MY DEAR SIR,

My letters being of no value but as tokens of friendship, I waited for the opportunity of a frank, which I had reason to expect earlier. Sincerely do we all congratulate you upon your marriage. Accept our best wishes upon the event, and believe that we shall always be deeply interested in your welfare. Make our kind regards also to Mrs. Hamilton, who of course will be included in every friendly hope and expectation formed for yourself.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 275-6.

We look with anxiety to your sister Eliza's success in her schemes,—but for pecuniary recompense in literature, especially poetical, nothing can be more unpromising than the present state of affairs, except what we have to fear for the future. Mrs. Godwyn, who sends verses to Blackwood, is our neighbour. I have had no conversation with her myself upon the subject, but a friend of hers says she has reason to believe that she has got nothing but a present of books. This however is of no moment, as Mrs. G. being a person of easy fortune she has not probably bargained for a return in money. Mrs. Hemans I see continues to publish in the periodicals. If you ever see her, pray remember me affectionately to her, and tell her that I have often been, and still am, troubled in conscience for having left her obliging letter so long unanswered; but she must excuse me as there is not a motive in my mind urging me to throw any interest into my letters to friends beyond the expression of kindness and esteem; and *that* she does not require from me. Besides my friends in general know how much I am hindered in all my pursuits by the inflammation to which my eyes are so frequently subject. I have long since given up all exercise of them by candlelight, and the evenings and nights are the seasons when one is most disposed to converse in that way with absent friends. News you do not care about, and I have none for you, except what concerns friends. My sister, God be thanked, has had a respite. She can now walk a few steps about her room, and has been borne twice into the open air. Southey to whom I sent your Sonnets had, I grieve to say, a severe attack of some unknown and painful complaint, about ten days ago. It weakened him much, but he is now I believe perfectly recovered. Coleridge I have reason to think is confined to his bed; his mind vigorous as ever. Your Sonnets I think are as good as anything you have done in verse. We like the 2d best; and I single it out the more readily as it allows me an opportunity of reminding you of what I have so often insisted upon, the extreme care which is necessary in the composition of poetry.

‘The ancient image *shall not* depart
From my soul’s temple, the refined gold
Already prov’d remain.’

Your meaning is that it shall remain, but according to the construction of our language, you have said ‘it shall not.’

‘The refined gold,
Well proved, shall then remain,’

will serve to explain my objection.

Could not you take us in your way coming or going to Cambridge? If Mrs. H. accompanies you, we should be glad to see her also.

I hope that in the meeting about to take place in Cambridge there will be less of mutual flattery among the men of science than appeared in that of the last year at Oxford. Men of science in England seem, indeed, to copy their fellows in France, by stepping too much out of their way for titles, and baubles of that kind, and for offices of state and political struggles, which they would do better to keep out of.

With kindest regards to yourself and Mrs. H., and to your sisters, believe me ever,

My dear Mr. H.,

Faithfully yours,

W. W.*

87. *Of ‘Elia’: Miss Wordsworth.*

LETTER TO CHARLES LAMB, ESQ.

Rydal Mount [Friday, May 17. 1833, or thereabouts].

MY DEAR LAMB,

I have to thank you and Moxon for a delightful volume, your last (I hope not) of ‘Elia.’ I have read it all except some of the ‘Popular Fallacies,’ which I reserve. The book has much pleased the whole of my family, viz. my wife, daughter, Miss Hutchinson, and my poor dear sister, on her sick bed; they all return their best thanks. I am not sure but I like the ‘Old China,’ and the ‘Wedding,’ as well as any of the Essays. I read ‘Love me and my Dog’ to my poor sister this morning.

I have been thus particular, knowing how much you and your dear sister value this excellent person, whose tenderness of heart I do not honestly believe was ever exceeded by any of God’s creatures. Her loving-kindness has no bounds. God bless her

* *Memoirs*, ii. 276-7, with important additions from the original.

for ever and ever ! Again thanking you for your excellent book, and wishing to know how you and your dear sister are, with best love to you both from us all,

I remain, my dear Lamb,
Your faithful friend,

W. WORDSWORTH.*

88. ‘*Specimens of English Sonnets:*’ *Criticisms, &c.*

LETTER TO THE REV. ALEXANDER DYCE.

[No date to this Letter, but written in 1833.]

MY DEAR SIR,

The dedication† which you propose I shall esteem as an honour ; nor do I conceive upon what ground, but an over-scrupulous modesty, I could object to it.

Be assured that Mr. Southey will not have the slightest unwillingness to your making any use you think proper of his ‘Memoir of Bampfylde :’ I shall not fail to mention the subject to him upon the first opportunity.

You propose to give specimens of the best *sonnet-writers* in our language. May I ask if by this be meant a selection of the *best sonnets*, *best* both as to *kind* and *degree*? A sonnet may be excellent in its kind, but that kind of very inferior interest to one of a higher order, though not perhaps in every minute particular quite so well executed, and from the pen of a writer of inferior genius. It should seem that the best rule to follow would be, first, to pitch upon the sonnets which are best *both* in kind and perfectness of execution, and, next, those which, although of a humbler quality, are admirable for the finish and happiness of the execution, taking care to exclude all those which have not one or other of these recommendations, however striking they might be, as characteristic of the age in which the author lived, or some peculiarity of his manner. The 10th sonnet of Donne, beginning ‘Death, be not proud,’ is so eminently characteristic of his manner, and at the same time so weighty in the thought, and vigorous in the expression, that I would entreat you to insert it, though to modern taste it may

* *Memoirs*, ii. 277-8.

† I had requested permission to dedicate a little book, *Specimens of English Sonnets*, to Mr. W. A. D.

be repulsive, quaint, and laboured. There are two sonnets of Russell, which, in all probability, you may have noticed, ‘Could, then, the babes,’ and the one upon Philoctetes, the last six lines of which are first-rate. Southey’s ‘Sonnet to Winter’ pleases me much; but, above all, among modern writers, that of Sir Egerton Brydges, upon ‘Echo and Silence.’ Miss Williams’s ‘Sonnet upon Twilight’ is pleasing; that upon ‘Hope’ of great merit.

Do you mean to have a short preface upon the construction of the sonnet? Though I have written so many, I have scarcely made up my own mind upon the subject. It should seem that the sonnet, like every other legitimate composition, ought to have a beginning, a middle, and an end; in othe words, to consist of three parts, like the three propositions of a syllogism, if such an illustration may be used. But the frame of metre adopted by the Italians does not accord with this view; and, as adhered to by them, it seems to be, if not arbitrary, best fitted to a division of the sense into two parts, of eight and six lines each. Milton, however, has not submitted to this; in the better half of his sonnets the sense does not close with the rhyme at the eighth line, but overflows into the second portion of the metre. Now it has struck me that this is not done merely to gratify the ear by variety and freedom of sound, but also to aid in giving that pervading sense of intense unity in which the excellency of the sonnet has always seemed to me mainly to consist. Instead of looking at this composition as a piece of architecture, making a whole out of three parts, I have been much in the habit of preferring the image of an orbicular body,—a sphere, or a dew-drop. All this will appear to you a little fanciful; and I am well aware that a sonnet will often be found excellent, where the beginning, the middle, and the end are distinctly marked, and also where it is distinctly separated into *two* parts, to which, as I before observed, the strict Italian model, as they write it, is favourable. Of this last construction of sonnet, Russell’s upon ‘Philoctetes’ is a fine specimen; the first eight lines give the hardship of the case, the six last the consolation, or the *per-contra*.

Ever faithfully

Your much obliged friend and servant,

W. WORDSWORTH.

P.S. In the case of the Cumberland poet, I overlooked a most pathetic circumstance. While he was lying under the tree, and his friends were saving what they could from the flames, he desired them to bring out the box that contained his papers, if possible. A person went back for it, but the bottom dropped out, and the papers fell into the flames and were consumed. Immediately upon hearing this, the poor old man expired.*

89. *The Poems of Lady Winchelsea, Skelton, &c.*

LETTER TO THE REV. ALEXANDER DYCE.

Lowther Castle, Sept. 23 [qu. Aug. 1833.
No date of the Year.]

MY DEAR SIR,

I have put off replying to your obliging letter till I could procure a frank; as I had little more to say than to thank you for your attention to Lady Winchelsea,† and for the extracts you sent me.

I expected to find at this place my friend, Lady Frederick Bentinck, through whom I intended to renew my request for materials, if any exist, among the Finch family, whether manuscript poems, or anything else that would be interesting; but Lady F., unluckily, is not likely to be in Westmoreland. I shall, however, write to her. Without some additional materials, I think I should scarcely feel strong enough to venture upon any species of publication connected with this very interesting woman, notwithstanding the kind things you say of the value of my critical remarks.

I am glad you have taken Skelton in hand, and much wish I could be of any use to you. In regard to his life, I am certain of having read somewhere (I thought it was in Burns's 'History of Cumberland and Westmoreland,' but I am mistaken), that Skelton was born at Branthwaite Hall, in the county of Cumberland. Certain it is that a family of that name possessed the place for many generations; and I own it would give me some pleasure to make out that Skelton was a brother Cumbrian. Branthwaite Hall is about six miles from Cockermouth, my

* *Memoirs*, ii. 278-81.

† i.e. To Mr. W.'s request that I would, if possible, furnish him with some particulars about her. A. D.

native place. Tickell (of the *Spectator*), one of the best of our minor poets, as Johnson has truly said, was born within two miles of the same town. These are mere accidents, it is true, but I am foolish enough to attach some interest to them.

If it would be more agreeable to you, I would mention your views in respect to Skelton to Mr. Southey : I should have done so before, but it slipped my memory when I saw him. Mr. Southey is undoubtedly much engaged, but I cannot think that he would take ill a letter from you on any literary subject. At all events, I shall, in a few days, mention your intention of editing Skelton, and ask if he has anything to suggest.

I meditate a little tour in Scotland this autumn, my principal object being to visit Sir Walter Scott ; but as I take my daughter along with me, we probably shall go to Edinburgh, Glasgow, and take a peep at the western Highlands. This will not bring us near Aberdeen.* If it suited you to return to town by the Lakes, I should be truly glad to see you at Rydal Mount, near Ambleside. You might, at all events, call on Mr. Southey in your way ; I would prepare an introduction for you, by naming your intention to Mr. S. I have added this, because my Scotch tour would, I fear, make it little likely that I should be at home about the 10th September. Your return, however, may be deferred.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Very respectfully, your obliged,

W. WORDSWORTH.

P.S. I hope your health continues good. I assure you there was no want of interest in your conversation on that or any other account.†

90. ‘Popularity’ of Poetry.

LETTER TO E. MOXON, ESQ.

Lowther Castle, Westmoreland, Aug. 1833.

MY DEAR MR. MOXON,

There does not appear to be much genuine relish for poetical publications in Cumberland, if I may judge from the fact of not a copy of my poems having been sold there by one of

* Where I then was. A. D.

† *Memoirs*, ii. 281-3.

the leading booksellers, though Cumberland is my native county. Byron and Scott are, I am persuaded, the only *popular* writers in that line,—perhaps the word ought rather to be that they are *fashionable* writers.

My poor sister is something better in health. Pray remember me very affectionately to Charles Lamb, and to his dear sister, if she be in a state to receive such communications from her friends. I hope Mr. Rogers is well; give my kindest regards to him also.

Ever, my dear Mr. Moxon,
Faithfully yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.*

91. *Sonnets, and less-known female Poets: Hartley Coleridge, &c.*

LETTER TO THE REV. ALEXANDER DYCE.

Rydal Mount, Dec. 4. 1833.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your elegant volume of Sonnets,† which you did me the honour to dedicate to me, was received a few months after the date of the accompanying letter; and the copy for Mr. Southey was forwarded immediately, as you may have learned long ago, by a letter from himself. Supposing you might not be returned from Scotland, I have deferred offering my thanks for this mark of your attention; and about the time when I should otherwise probably have written, I was seized with an inflammation in my eyes, from the *effects* of which I am not yet so far recovered as to make it prudent for me to use them in writing or reading.‡

The selection of sonnets appears to me to be very judicious. If I were inclined to make an exception, it would be in the single case of the sonnet of Coleridge upon ‘Schiller,’ which is too much of a rant for my taste. The one by him upon ‘Linley’s Music’ is much superior in execution; indeed, as a strain of feeling, and for unity of effect, it is very happily done. I was glad to see Mr. Southey’s ‘Sonnet to Winter.’ A lyrical poem of my own, upon the disasters of the French army in Russia, has

* *Memoirs*, ii. 283.

† *Specimens of English Sonnets. A. D.*

‡ This letter is in the handwriting of Miss D. Wordsworth, but signed by Mr. W. A. D.

so striking a resemblance to it, in contemplating winter under two aspects, that, in justice to Mr. Southey, who preceded me, I ought to have acknowledged it in a note; and I shall do so upon some future occasion.

How do you come on with Skelton? And is there any prospect of a new edition of your *Specimens of British Poetesses*? If I could get at the original works of the elder poetesses, such as the Duchess of Newcastle, Mrs. Behn, Orinda, &c., I should be happy to assist you with my judgment in such a publication, which, I think, might be made still more interesting than this first edition, especially if more matter were crowded into a page. The two volumes of *Poems by Eminent Ladies*, Helen Maria Williams's works, Mrs. Smith's Sonnets, and Lady Winchelsea's Poems, form the scanty materials which I possess for assisting such a publication.

It is a remarkable thing, that the two best ballads, perhaps, of modern times, viz. 'Auld Robin Grey' and the 'Lament for the Defeat of the Scots at Flodden-field,' are both from the pens of females.

I shall be glad to hear that your health is improved, and your spirits good, so that the world may continue to be benefited by your judicious and tasteful labours.

Pray let me hear from you at your leisure; and believe me, dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.

P.S. It is a pity that Mr. Hartley Coleridge's Sonnets had not been published before your Collection was made, as there are several well worthy of a place in it. Last midsummer I made a fortnight's tour in the Isle of Man, Staffa, Iona, &c., which produced between thirty and forty sonnets, some of which, I think, would please you.

Could not you contrive to take the Lakes in your way, sometimes, to or from Scotland? I need not say how glad I should be to see you for a few days.

What a pity that Mr. Heber's wonderful collection of books is about to be dispersed!*

* *Memoirs*, ii. 284-6.

92. *Proposed Dedication of Poems to Wordsworth.*

LETTER TO MRS. HEMANS.

Rydal Mount, April 1834.

MY DEAR MRS. HEMANS,

You have submitted what you intended as a dedication of your poems to me. I need scarcely say that, as a *private letter*, such expressions from such a quarter could not have been received by me but with pleasure of *no ordinary kind*, unchecked by any consideration but the fear that my writings were overrated by you, and my character thought better of than it deserved. But I must say, that a *public testimony*, in so high a strain of admiration, is what I cannot but shrink from: be this modesty true or false, it is in me; you must bear with it, and make allowance for it. And, therefore, as you have submitted the whole to my judgment, I am emboldened to express a wish that you would, instead of this dedication, in which your warm and kind heart has overpowered you, simply inscribe them to me, with such expression of respect or gratitude as would come within the limits of the rule which, after what has been said above, will naturally suggest itself. Of course, if the sheet has been struck off, I must hope that my shoulders may become a little more Atlantean than I now feel them to be.

My sister is not quite so well. She, Mrs. W., and Dora, all unite with me in best wishes and kindest remembrances to yourself and yours; and

Believe me, dear Mrs. Hemans,
To remain faithfully yours,
WM. WORDSWORTH.*

93. *Verse-Attempts.*

LETTER TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR WM. M. GOMM.

Rydal Mount, April 16. 1834.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your verses, for which I sincerely thank you, are an additional proof of the truth which forced from me, many years ago, the exclamation, ‘O, many are the poets that are sown by nature!’† The rest of that paragraph also has some

* *Memoirs*, ii. 286-7.† *Excursion*, book i.

bearing upon your position in the poetical world. The thoughts and images through both the poems, and the feelings also, are eminently such as become their several subjects ; but it would be insincerity were I to omit adding, that there is here and there a want of that skill in *workmanship*, which I believe nothing but continued practice in the art can bestow. I have used the word *art*, from a conviction, which I am called upon almost daily to express, that poetry is infinitely more of an art than the world is disposed to believe. Nor is this any dishonour to it ; both for the reason that the poetic faculty is not rarely bestowed, and for this cause, also, that men would not be disposed to ascribe so much to inspiration, if they did not feel how near and dear to them poetry is.

With sincere regards and best wishes to yourself and Lady Gomm,

Believe me to be very sincerely yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.*

94. *The Poems of Mrs. Hemans.*

LETTER TO MRS. HEMANS.

Rydal Mount, Sept. 1834.

MY DEAR MRS. HEMANS,

I avail myself gladly of the opportunity of Mr. Graves's return, to acknowledge the honour you have done me in prefixing my name to your volume of beautiful poems, and to thank you for the copy you have sent me with your own auto-graph. Where there is so much to admire, it is difficult to select ; and therefore I shall content myself with naming only two or three pieces. And, first, let me particularise the piece that stands second in the volume, 'Flowers and Music in a Sick Room.' This was especially touching to me, on my poor sister's account, who has long been an invalid, confined almost to her chamber. The feelings are sweetly touched throughout this poem, and the imagery very beautiful ; above all, in the passage where you describe the colour of the petals of the wild rose. This morning, I have read the stanzas upon 'Elysium' with great pleasure. You have admirably expanded the thought of Chateaubriand. If we had not been disappointed in our ex-

* *Memoirs*, ii. 287-8.

pected pleasure of seeing you here, I should have been tempted to speak of many other passages and poems with which I have been delighted.

Your health, I hope,* is by this time re-established. Your son, Charles, looks uncommonly well, and we have had the pleasure of seeing him and his friends several times; but as you are aware, we are much engaged with visitors at this season of the year, so as not always to be able to follow our inclinations as to whom we would wish to see. I cannot conclude without thanking you for your Sonnet upon a place so dear to me as Grasmere: it is worthy of the subject. With kindest remembrances, in which unite Mrs. W., my sister, and Dora, I remain, dear Mrs. Hemans,

Your much obliged friend,
WM. WORDSWORTH.

I have written very hastily to spare my eyes; a liberty which you will excuse.†

95. *Of the Church of England, &c.*

LETTER TO THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON WRANGHAM.

Rydal Mount, Feb. 2. 1835.

MY DEAR WRANGHAM,

Sincere thanks are due from me for the attention you paid to Mrs. W.'s letter, written during my absence. You know the favourable opinion I entertain of Mr. Graves; and I was under a promise to let him know, if any vacancy occurred in the neighbourhood, and to do all I could, without infringing upon prior or stronger claims, to promote the attainment of his wishes.

The mind of every thinking man who is attached to the Church of England must at this time be especially turned to reflections upon all points of ecclesiastical polity, government, and management, which may tend to strengthen the Establishment in the affections of the people, and enlarge the sphere of its efficiency. It cannot, then, I feel, be impertinent in me, though a layman, to express upon this occasion my satisfaction,

* This hope, alas! was not realised. Mrs. Hemans died in the following year, May 16, 1835.

† *Memoirs*, ii. 291-2.

qualified as it is by what has been said above, in finding from this instance that our diocesan is unwilling to station clergymen in cures with which they are locally connected. Some years ago, when the present Bishop of London, then of Chester, was residing in this neighbourhood, I took the liberty of strenuously recommending to him not to ordain young men to curacies where they had been brought up, or in the midst of their own relatives. I had seen too much of the mischief of this, especially as affecting the functions and characters of ministers born and bred up in the lower classes of society. It has been painful to me to observe the false position, as the French would call it, in which men so placed are. Their habits, their manners, and their talk, their acquaintanceships, their friendships, and, let me say, their domestic affections, naturally and properly draw them one way, while their professional obligations point out another ; and, accordingly, if they are sensible of both, they live in a perpetual conflict, and are liable to be taxed with pride and ingratitude, as seeming to neglect their old friends, when they only associate with them with that reserve, and under those restraints, which their sacred profession enjoins. If, on the other hand, they fall into unrestrained familiarity with the associates of their earlier life and boyish days, how injurious to their ministry such intercourse would be, must flash upon every man's mind whose thoughts have turned for a moment to the subject. Allow me to add a word upon the all-important matter of testimonials. The case of the Rector of —— and of —— presses it closely upon my mind. Had the individuals who signed those documents been fitly impressed with the awfulness of the act they were about to engage in, they could not have undertaken it. . . . Would it not be a good plan for bishops to exclude testimonials from relatives and near connections ? It is painful to notice what a tendency there is in men's minds to allow even a slight call of private regard to outweigh a very strong claim of duty to the public, and not less in sacred concerns than in civil.

Your hands, my dear friend, have failed, as well as my eyes, so that we are neither of us in very flourishing trim for active correspondence : be assured, however, I participate the feelings you express. Last year has robbed me of Coleridge, of Charles Lamb, James Losh, Rudd, of Trinity, Fleming, just gone, and other schoolfellows and contemporaries. I cannot forget that

Shakspeare, who scarcely survived fifty (I am now near the close of my sixty-fifth year), wrote,

‘In me that time of life thou dost behold,
When yellow leaves, or few, or none, do hang
Upon the bough.’

How much more reason have we to break out into such a strain! Let me hear from you from time to time; I shall feel a lively interest in all that concerns you. I remain faithfully yours,

W. W.*

96. *Of ‘The Omnipresence of the Deity,’ &c.*

LETTER TO THE REV. ROBERT MONTGOMERY.

Feb. 1835.

MY DEAR SIR,

On my return home, after an absence of some length, I have had the pleasure of receiving your two volumes.

With your ‘Omnipresence of the Deity’† I was acquainted long ago, having read it and other parts of your writings with much pleasure, though with some abatement, such as you yourself seem sufficiently aware of, and which, in the works of so young a writer, were by me gently judged, and in many instances regarded, though in themselves faults, as indications of future excellence. In your letter, for which also I thank you, you allude to your Preface, and desire to know if my opinion concurs with yours on the subject of sacred poetry. That Preface has been read to me, and I can answer in the affirmative; but at the same time allow me frankly to tell you that what *most* pleased me in that able composition is to be found in the few concluding paragraphs, beginning ‘It is now seven years since,’ &c.

I cannot conclude without one word of literary advice, which I hope you will deem my advanced age entitles me to give. Do not, my dear Sir, be anxious about any individual’s opinion concerning your writings, however highly you may think of his genius or rate his judgment. Be a severe critic to yourself;

* *Memoirs*, ii. 292-4.

† Mr. Montgomery informed the (now) Bishop of Lincoln that ‘this poem when forwarded to Wordsworth was not in the condition in which it is now, but that it had been almost rewritten, and was also his earliest poem—composed when he was nineteen.’ G.

and depend upon it no person's decision upon the merit of your works will bear comparison in point of value with your own. You must be conscious from what feeling they have flowed, and how far they may or may not be allowed to claim, on that account, permanent respect; and, above all, I would remind you, with a view to tranquillise and steady your mind, that no man takes the trouble of surveying and pondering another's writings with a hundredth part of the care which an author of sense and genius will have bestowed upon his own. Add to this reflection another, which I press upon you, as it has supported me through life, viz. that Posterity will settle all accounts justly, and that works which deserve to last will last; and if undeserving this fate, the sooner they perish the better.

Believe me to be faithfully,

Your much obliged,

W. WORDSWORTH.*

97. *A new Church at Cockermouth.*

LETTER TO JAMES STANGER, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

The obstacle arising out of conflicting opinions in regard to the patronage, one must be prepared for in every project of this kind. Mutual giving-way is indispensable, and I hope it will not ultimately be wanting in this case.

The point immediately to be attended to is the raising a sufficient sum to insure from the Church Building Societies a portion of the surplus fund which they have at command, and which I know, on account of claims from many places, they are anxious to apply as speedily as possible. If time be lost, that sum will be lost to Cockermouth.

In the question of the patronage as between the bishop and the people, I entirely concur with you in preference of the former. Such is now the force of public opinion, that bishops are not likely to present upon merely selfish considerations; and if the judgment of one be not good, that of his successor may make amends, and probably will. But elections of this sort, when vested in the inhabitants, have, as far as my experience goes, given rise to so many cabals and manœuvres, and caused such

* *Memoirs*, ii. 294-6.

enmities and heart-burnings, that Christian charity has been driven out of sight by them : and how often, and how soon, have the successful party been seen to repent of their own choice !

The course of public affairs being what it is in respect to the Church, I cannot reconcile myself to delay from a hope of succeeding at another time. If we can get a new church erected at Cockermouth, great will be the benefit, with the blessing of God, to that place ; and our success cannot, I trust, but excite some neighbouring places to follow the example.

The little that I can do in my own sphere shall be attempted immediately, with especial view to insure the coöperation of the societies. Happy should I be if you and other gentlemen would immediately concur in this endeavour.

I remain, &c.

Wm. WORDSWORTH.*

98. *Of the Same.*

Rydal Mount, Jan. 1836.

MY DEAR C——,

Now let me tell you, but more for your father's sake than yours, that in a letter which I received from Lord Lonsdale yesterday he generously proposes to endow a new church at Cockermouth with 150*l.* per annum. From a conversation with him in the autumn, I expected he would do as much, though he did not then permit me, as he has done now, to mention it publicly.†

99. *Classic Scenes : Holy Land.*

We often think with much interest of your sister Eliza, and with a thousand good wishes that her bold adventure may turn out well. If she finds herself at liberty to move about, her sensitive, imaginative, and thoughtful mind cannot but be profitably excited and substantially enriched by what she will see in that most interesting part of the world [Smyrna, and the coast of Asia Minor]. How should I like, old as I am, to visit those classic shores and the Holy Land, with all its remembrances so sweet and solemn !‡

* *Memoirs*, ii. 296-7.

† Extract: *Memoirs*, ii. 298.

‡ Extract of letter to Sir W. R. Hamilton, Dublin, Jan. 11, 1836. Here first printed.

100. *American Edition of Poems, &c.*

LETTER TO PROFESSOR HENRY REED, OF PHILADELPHIA.

London, August 19 [1837].

MY DEAR SIR,

Upon returning from a tour of several months upon the Continent, I find two letters from you awaiting my arrival, along with the edition of my Poems you have done me the honour of editing. To begin with the former letter, April 25, 1836 : It gives me concern that you should have thought it necessary (not to *apologise*, for that you have not done, but) to explain at length why you addressed me in the language of affectionate regard. It must surely be gratifying to one, whose aim as an author has been the hearts of his fellow-creatures of all ranks and in all stations, to find that he has succeeded in any quarter ; and still more must he be gratified to learn that he has pleased in a distant country men of simple habits and cultivated taste, who are at the same time widely acquainted with literature. Your second letter, accompanying the edition of the Poems, I have read, but unluckily have it not before me. It was lent to Serjeant Talfourd, on account of the passage in it that alludes to the possible and desirable establishment of English copyright in America. I shall now hasten to notice the edition which you have superintended of my Poems. This I can do with much pleasure, as the book, which has been shown to several persons of taste, Mr. Rogers in particular, is allowed to be far the handsomest specimen of printing in double columns which they have seen. Allow me to thank you for the pains you have bestowed upon the work. Do not apprehend that any difference in our several arrangements of the poems can be of much importance ; you appear to understand me far too well for that to be possible. I have only to regret, in respect to this volume, that it should have been published before my last edition, in the correction of which I took great pains, as my last labour in that way, and which moreover contains several additional pieces. It may be allowed me also to express a hope that such a law will be passed ere long by the American legislature, as will place English authors in general upon a better footing in America than at present they have obtained, and that the protection of copyright between the two countries will be reci-

procal. The vast circulation of English works in America offers a temptation for hasty and incorrect printing; and that same vast circulation would, without adding to the price of each copy of an English work in a degree that could be grudged or thought injurious by any purchaser, allow an American remuneration, which might add considerably to the comforts of English authors, who may be in narrow circumstances, yet who at the same time may have written solely from honourable motives. Besides, Justice is the foundation on which both law and practice ought to rest.

Having many letters to write on returning to England after so long an absence, I regret that I must be so brief on the present occasion. I cannot conclude; however, without assuring you that the acknowledgments which I receive from the vast continent of America are among the most grateful that reach me. What a vast field is there open to the English mind, acting through our noble language! Let us hope that our authors of true genius will not be unconscious of that thought, or inattentive to the duty which it imposes upon them, of doing their utmost to instruct, to purify, and to elevate their readers. That such may be my own endeavour through the short time I shall have to remain in this world, is a prayer in which I am sure you and your life's partner will join me. Believe me gratefully,

Your much obliged friend,

W. WORDSWORTH.*

101. *Of the Poems of Quillinan, and Revision of his own Poems.*

LETTER TO EDWARD QUILLINAN, ESQ.

Brinsop Court, Sept. 20. 1837.

MY DEAR MR. QUILLINAN,

We are heartily glad to learn from your letter, just received, that, in all probability, by this time, you must have left the unhappy country in which you have been so long residing. I should not have been sorry if you had entered a little more into Peninsular politics; for what is going on there is shocking to humanity, and one would be glad to see anything like an opening for the termination of these unnatural troubles.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 344-6.

The position of the Miguelites, relatively to the conflicting, so called, liberal parties, is just what I apprehended, and expressed very lately to Mr. Robinson.

He came down with us to Hereford with a view to a short tour on the banks of the Wye, which has been prevented by an unexpected attack of my old complaint of inflammation in the eye ; and in consequence of this, Dora will accompany me home, with a promise on her part of returning to London before the month of October is out. Our places are taken in to-morrow's coach for Liverpool ; so that, since we must be disappointed of seeing you and Jemima here, we trust that you will come on to Rydal from Leeds. This very day Dora had read to me your poem again : it convinces me, along with your other writings, that it is in your power to attain a permanent place among the poets of England. Your thoughts, feelings, knowledge, and judgment in style, and skill in metre, entitle you to it ; and, if you have not yet succeeded in gaining it, the cause appears to me merely to lie in the subjects which you have chosen. It is worthy of note how much of Gray's popularity is owing to the happiness with which his subject is selected in three places, his 'Hymn to Adversity,' his 'Ode on the distant Prospect of Eton College,' and his 'Elegy.' I ought, however, in justice to you, to add, that one cause of your failure appears to have been thinking too humbly of yourself, so that you have not reckoned it worth while to look sufficiently round you for the best subjects, or to employ as much time in reflecting, condensing, bringing out and placing your thoughts and feelings in the best point of view as is necessary. I will conclude this matter of poetry and my part of the letter, with requesting that, as an act of friendship, at your convenience, you would take the trouble—a considerable one, I own—of comparing the corrections in my last edition with the text in the preceding one. You know my principles of style better, I think, than any one else ; and I should be glad to learn if anything strikes you as being altered for the worse. You will find the principal changes are in 'The White Doe,' in which I had too little of the benefit of your help and judgment. There are several also in the Sonnets, both miscellaneous and political : in the other poems they are nothing like so numerous ; but here also I should be glad if you would take the like trouble. Jemima, I am sure, will be pleased to

assist you in the comparison, by reading, new or old, as you may think fit. With love to her, I remain,

My dear Mr. Quillinan,

Faithfully yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.*

102. *On a Tour.*

LETTER TO THE EARL OF LONSDALE.

After having had excellent health during my long ramble [in Herefordshire], it is unfortunate that I should thus be disabled at the conclusion. The mischief came to me in Herefordshire, whither I had gone on my way home to see my brother-in-law, who, by his horse falling with him some time ago, was left without the use of his limbs.

I was lately a few days with Mr. Rogers, at Broadstairs, and also with the Archbishop of Canterbury, at Addington Park; they were both well, and I was happy to see the Archbishop much stronger than his slender and almost feeble appearance would lead one to expect. We walked up and down in the park for three hours one day, and nearly four the next, without his seeming to be the least fatigued. I mention this as we must all feel the value of his life in this state of public affairs.

The cholera prevented us getting as far as Naples, which was the only disappointment we met with. As a man of letters I have to regret that this most interesting tour was not made by me earlier in life, as I might have turned the notices it has supplied me with to more account than I now expect to do. With respectful remembrances to Lady Lonsdale, and to your Lordship, in which Mrs. W. unites,

I remain, my dear Lord, faithfully,

Your much obliged servant,

WM. WORDSWORTH.†

103. *Of Bentley and Akenside.*

LETTER TO THE REV. ALEXANDER DYCE.

Dec. 23. 1837.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have just received your valuable present of Bent-

* *Memoirs*, ii. 347-8.

† *Ibid.* ii. 349.

ley's works, for which accept my cordial thanks, as also for the leaf to be added to Akenside.

Is it recorded in your Memoir of Akenside,—for I have not leisure nor eyesight at present to look,—that he was fond of sitting in St. James's Park with his eyes upon Westminster Abbey? This, I am sure, I have either read or heard of him; and I imagine that it was from Mr. Rogers. I am not unfrequently a visitor on Hampstead Heath, and seldom pass by the entrance of Mr. Dyson's villa on Goulder's Hill, close by, without thinking of the pleasure which Akenside often had there.

I cannot call to mind a reason why you should not think some passages in 'The Power of Sound' equal to anything I have produced. When first printed in the 'Yarrow Revisited,' I placed it at the end of the volume, and, in the last edition of my Poems, at the close of the Poems of Imagination, indicating thereby my *own* opinion of it.

How much do I regret that I have neither learning nor eyesight thoroughly to enjoy Bentley's masterly 'Dissertation upon the Epistles of Phalaris'? Many years ago I read the work with infinite pleasure. As far as I know, or rather am able to judge, it is without a rival in that department of literature; a work of which the English nation may be proud as long as acute intellect, and vigorous powers, and profound scholarship shall be esteemed in the world.

Let me again repeat my regret that in passing to and from Scotland you have never found it convenient to visit this part of the country. I should be delighted to see you, and I am sure Mr. Southey would be the same: and in his house you would find an inexhaustible collection of books, many curious no doubt; but his classical library is much the least valuable part of it. The death of his excellent wife was a deliverance for herself and the whole family, so great had been her sufferings of mind and body.

You do not say a word about Skelton; and I regret much your disappointment in respect of Middleton.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Faithfully, your much obliged,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

* *Memoirs*, ii. 350-1.

104. *Presidency of Royal Dublin Society : Patronage of Genius : Canons of Criticism : Family News.*

LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM R. HAMILTON.

Rydal Mount, Dec. 21 [1837].

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

The papers had informed me of the honour conferred upon you, and I was intending to congratulate you on the occasion, when your letter arrived. The electors have done great credit to themselves by appointing you, and not a little by rejecting the ultra-liberal Archbishop, and that by so decided a majority. We are much pleased that your sister, who we conclude is well, has sent her Poems to press, and wish they may obtain the attention we are sure they will merit. Your own two Sonnets, for which I thank you, we read, that is Mrs. W. and myself (Dora is in the South), with interest. But to the main purport of your letter. You pay me an undeserved compliment in requesting my opinion, how you could best promote some of the benefits which the Society, at whose head you are placed, aims at. As to patronage, you are right in supposing that I hold it in little esteem for helping genius forward in the fine arts, especially those whose medium is words. Sculpture and painting *may* be helped by it ; but even in those departments there is much to be dreaded. The French have established an Academy at Rome upon an extensive scale ; and so far from doing good, I was told by every one that it had done much harm. The plan is this : they select the most distinguished students from the school or academy at Paris and send them to Rome, with handsome stipends, by which they are tempted into idleness, and of course into vice. So that it looks like a contrivance for preventing the French nation and the world at large profiting by the genius which nature may have bestowed, and which left to itself would in some cases, perhaps, have prospered. The principal, I was indeed told the only, condition imposed upon these students is, that each of them send annually some work of his hands to Paris. When at Rome, I saw a good deal of English artists. They seemed to be living happily and doing well, tho', as you are aware, the public patronage any of them receive is trifling.

Genius in poetry, or any department of what is called the

Belles Lettres, is much more likely to be cramped than fostered by public support: better wait to reward those who have done their work, tho' even here national rewards are not necessary, unless the labourers be, if not in poverty, at least in narrow circumstances. Let the laws be but just to them and they will be sure of attaining competence, if they have not misjudged their own talents or misapplied them.

The cases of Chatterton, Burns, and others, might, it should seem, be urged against the conclusion that help beforehand is not required; but I do think that in the temperament of the two I have mentioned there was something which, however favourable had been their circumstances, however much they had been encouraged and supported, would have brought on their ruin. As to what Patronage can do in Science, discoveries in Physics, mechanic arts, &c., you know far better than I can pretend to do.

As to 'better canons of criticism and general improvement of scholars,' I really, speaking without affectation, am so little of a Critic or Scholar, that it would be presumptuous in me to *write* upon the subject to you. If we were together and you should honour me by asking my opinion upon particular points, that would be a very different thing, and I might have something to say not wholly without value. But where could I begin with so comprehensive an argument, and how could I put into the compass of a letter my thoughts, such as they may be, with anything like order? It is somewhat mortifying to me to disappoint you. You must upon reflection I trust perceive, that in attempting to comply with your wish I should only lose myself in a wilderness. I have been applied to to give lectures upon Poetry in a public institution in London, but I was conscious that I was neither competent to the office, nor the public prepared to receive what I should have felt it my duty to say, however [inadequately?].

I have [had] a very pleasant and not profitless tour on the Continent, tho' with one great drawback, the being obliged on account of the cholera to return without seeing Naples and its neighbourhood. Had it not been for the state of my eyes, which became inflamed after I got back to England, I should have been able to take Liverpool in my way home, at the time you were there. The attack continued for a long time, and has left a weakness in the organ which does not yet allow me either to read or write; but with care I hope to come about.

My sister continues in the same enfeebled state of mind and body. Mrs. W. is well; but your godson, we hear, is suffering from derangement of the stomach, so that at present he is not a thriving child, but his elder brother is now remarkably so, and he about the same age was subject to the same trials. We trust that your little family are all flourishing, and with our united affectionate regards believe me, faithfully,

Dear Sir W., yours,

WM. WORDSWORTH.

I am sorry that I cannot send this thro' Lord Northampton, because he tells me he is coming northward.*

105. *Prose-writing: Coleridge: Royal Dublin Society: Select Minds: Copyright: Private Affairs.*

LETTER TO SIR WILLIAM R. HAMILTON.

Rydal Mount, Jan. 4. 1838.

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

From a hope of something starting up in my mind which might prevent my letter being an utter disappointment, I have not answered yours, as I wished to do, by return of post. But I am really still as much at a loss how to make my letter worth reading as if I had replied immediately. Allow me, however, to thank you for your last, which has completely done away with the vagueness of the former; I now distinctly understand you, and as to one of your leading points, viz. availing myself of publication through your Society, I may say that if there had been among my papers anything of the kind you wish for, I should have gladly forwarded it to you. But it is not so, nor dare I undertake to promise anything of the kind for the future. Though prevailed upon by Mr. Coleridge to write the first Preface to my Poems, which tempted, or rather forced, me to add a supplement to it, and induced by my friendship for him to write the Essay upon Epitaphs now appended to 'The Excursion,' but first composed for 'The Friend,' I have never felt inclined to write criticism, though I have talked, and am daily talking, a great deal. If I were several years younger, out of friendship to you mainly, I would sit down to the task of giving a body to

* Here first printed. G.

my notions upon the essentials of Poetry ; a subject which could not be properly treated, without adverting to the other branches of fine art. But at present, with so much before me that I could wish to do in verse, and the melancholy fact brought daily more and more home to my conviction, that intellectual labour, by its action on the brain and nervous system, is injurious to the bodily powers, and especially to my eyesight, I should only be deceiving myself and misleading you, were I to encourage a hope that, much as I could wish to be your fellow-labourer, however humbly, I shall ever become so.

Having disposed of this rather painful part of the subject of your letter, let me say, that though it is principally matters of science in which publication through your Society would be serviceable, and indeed in that department eminently so, I concur with you in thinking, that the same vehicle would be useful for bringing under the notice of the thinking part of the community critical essays of too abstract a character to be fit for popularity. There are obviously, even in criticism, two ways of affecting the minds of men—the one by treating the matter so as to carry it immediately to the sympathies of the many ; and the other, by aiming at a few select and superior minds, that might each become a centre for illustrating it in a popular way. Mr. Coleridge, whom you allude to, acted upon the world to a great extent thro' the latter of these processes; and there cannot be a doubt that your Society might serve the cause of just thinking and pure taste should you, as president of it, hold up to view the desirableness of first conveying to a few, thro' that channel, reflections upon literature and art, which, if well meditated, would be sure of winning their way directly, or in their indirect results to a gradually widening circle.

May I not encourage a hope that during the ensuing summer, or at the worst at no distant period, you and I might meet, when a few hours' conversation would effect more than could come out of a dozen letters dictated, and hastily, as I am obliged to dictate this, from an unexpected interruption when Mrs. W. and I were sitting down with the pen in her hand ?

You are right in your recollection that I named to you the subject of foreign piracy, as injurious to English authors ; and I may add now that if it could be put a stop to, I believe that it would rarely happen that successful writers, on works of ima-

gination and feeling at least, would stand in need of pensions from Government, or would feel themselves justified in accepting them. Upon this subject I have spoken a great deal to M.P.'s of all parties, and with several distinguished Americans. I have also been in correspondence with the present Chancellor of the Exchequer upon it, and dwelt upon the same topic in a letter which I had occasion to write to Sir Robert Peel. Mr. Lytton Bulwer, as perhaps you know, drew the attention of Parliament to it during the late Session. Lord Palmerston said in answer to him, that the attention of Government had already been directed to the measure, and that it would not be lost sight of, or something to that purpose. I may claim some credit for my exertions in this business, and full as much, or more, for the pains which I have taken for many years, to interest men in the H[ouse] of C[ommons] in the extension of the term of copyright—a measure which I trust is about to be brought to a successful close by the exertions of my admirable friend Serjeant Talfourd. To him I have written upon the argument more than once. When this is effected, I trust the other part of the subject will be taken up with spirit, and if the Foreign Secretary, in whose department the matter lies, should be remiss, I trust he will be stimulated thro' Parliament, to which desirable end the services of distinguished societies like yours, and the notice of the question, by men of letters, in reviews or otherwise, would greatly contribute. Good authors, if justice were done to them by their own and foreign countries, now that reading is spread and spreading so widely, would very few of them be in need, except thro' their own fault.

When I was in town last August, the American minister, Mr. Stephenson, spoke to me with much indignation of the law and practice by which copyright was secured in England for American authors, while there was no reciprocity for English writers in America.

But I must conclude, or I shall miss the post. The father of your godson is here, and begs to be remembered to you.

Did I ever mention to you that owing to the sea having swallowed up his father-in-law's coal-pits, . . . income is much reduced; and he therefore feels it necessary to endeavour to procure a couple of pupils, who could afford to pay rather handsomely for the advantages they would have under his roof? By

this time he would have succeeded, but parents in the South have an unaccountable objection to sending their sons so far North. As the same might not be felt in Ireland, I take the liberty of mentioning his wish to you, being persuaded that if you can you will assist him in his views. If your address to your Society should be published, could you send it me, and acquaint me with what you have done ?

Affectionately yours,
W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

106. *Of his own Poems and posthumous Fame.*

LETTER TO HENRY REED, ESQ., PHILADELPHIA.

Rydal Mount, Dec. 23. 1839.

MY DEAR SIR,

The year is upon the point of expiring; and a letter of yours, dated May 7th, though not received till late in June (for I was moving about all last spring and part of the summer), remains unacknowledged. I have also to thank you for the acceptable present of the two volumes which reached me some time afterwards.

Your letters are naturally turned upon the impression which my poems have made, and the estimation they are held, or likely to be held in, through the vast country to which you belong. I wish I could feel as lively as you do upon this subject, or even upon the general destiny of those works. Pray do not be long surprised at this declaration. There is a difference of more than the length of your life, I believe, between our ages. I am standing on the brink of that vast ocean I must sail so soon; I must speedily lose sight of the shore; and I could not once have conceived how little I now am troubled by the thought of how long or short a time they who remain on that shore may have sight of me. The other day I chanced to be looking over a ms. poem, belonging to the year 1803, though not actually composed till many years afterwards. It was suggested by visiting the neighbourhood of Dumfries, in which Burns had resided, and where he died; it concluded thus :

'Sweet Mercy to the gates of heaven
This minstrel led, his sins forgiven;

* Here first printed. G.

The rueful conflict, the heart riven
 With vain endeavour,
 And memory of earth's bitter leaven
 Effaced for ever.'

Here the verses closed ; but I instantly added, the other day,

' But why to him confine the prayer,
 When kindred thoughts and yearnings bear
 On the frail heart the purest share
 With all that live ?
 The best of what we do and are,
 Just God, forgive !'

The more I reflect upon this last exclamation, the more I feel (and perhaps it may in some degree be the same with you) justified in attaching comparatively small importance to any literary monument that I may be enabled to leave behind. It is well, however, I am convinced, that men think otherwise in the earlier part of their lives ; and why it is so, is a point I need not touch upon in writing to you.

Before I dismiss this subject let me thank you for the extract from your intelligent friend's letter ; and allow me to tell you that I could not but smile at your Boston critic placing my name by the side of Cowley. I suppose he cannot mean anything more than that the same measure of reputation or fame (if that be not too presumptuous a word) is due to us both.

German transcendentalism, which you say this critic is infected by, would be a woeful visitation for the world. . . .

The way in which you speak of me in connection with your possible visit to England was most gratifying ; and I here repeat that I should be truly glad to see you in the delightful spot where I have long dwelt ; and I have the more pleasure in saying this to you, because, in spite of my old infirmity, my strength exceeds that of most men of my years, and my general health continues to be, as it always has been, remarkably good. A page of blank paper stares me in the face ; and I am not sure that it is worth while to fill it with a sonnet which broke from me not long ago in reading an account of misdoings in many parts of your Republic. Mrs. Wordsworth will, however, transcribe it.

' Men of the Western World ! in Fate's dark book,
 Whence these opprobrious leaves, of dire portent ?'

To turn to another subject. You will be sorry to learn that

several of my most valued friends are likely to suffer from the monetary derangements in America. My family, however, is no way directly entangled, unless the Mississippi bonds prove invalid. There is an opinion pretty current among discerning persons in England, that Republics are not to be trusted in money concerns,—I suppose because the sense of honour is more obtuse, the responsibility being divided among so many. For my own part, I have as little or less faith in absolute despots, except that they are more easily convinced that it is politic to keep up their credit by holding to their engagements. What power is maintained by this practice was shown by Great Britain in her struggle with Buonaparte. This lesson has not been lost on the leading monarchical states of Europe. But too much of this.

Believe me to remain,
Faithfully yours,

W^m. WORDSWORTH.*

107. *In the Sheldonian Theatre.*

LETTER TO JOHN PEACE, ESQ., CITY LIBRARY, BRISTOL.

Rydal Mount, Aug. 30. 1839.

MY DEAR SIR,

It was not a little provoking that I had not the pleasure of shaking you by the hand at Oxford when you did me the honour of coming so far to ‘join in the shout.’ I was told by a Fellow of University College that he had never witnessed such an outburst of enthusiasm in that place, except upon the occasions of the visits of the Duke of Wellington—one unexpected. My Nephew, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, was present, as well as my son, William, who, I am happy to say, is much better in health than when you saw him in Oxford. He is here, and desires to be kindly remembered to you.†

* *Memoirs*, ii. 351-4.

† Extract: *Memoirs*, ii. 357-8.

108. *New Edition of his Poems.*

LETTER TO EDWARD MOXON, ESQ.

Rydal Mount, Dec. 11. 1838.

DEAR MR. MOXON,

I am in hopes that my nephew, Mr. John Wordsworth, of Cambridge, will correct the proofs for me: he promised to do so, when he was here a few weeks ago; but I grieve to say he has been very unwell since, and may not be equal to the task; but I shall write to him on the subject. He is the most accurate man I know; and if a revise of each sheet could be sent to him the edition would be immaculate.

W. WORDSWORTH.*

109. *Death of his Nephew, John Wordsworth.*

LETTER TO LADY FREDERICK BENTINCK.

Rydal Mount, Ambleside (not Kendal), Jan. 3 [1840].

MY DEAR LADY FREDERICK,

Yesterday brought us melancholy news in a letter from my brother, Dr. Wordsworth, which announced the death of his eldest son. He died last Tuesday, in Trinity College, of which he was a fellow, having been tenderly nursed by his father during rather a long illness. He was a most amiable man, and I have reason to believe was one of the best scholars in Europe. We were all strongly attached to him, and, as his poor father writes, the loss is to him, and to his sorrowing sons, irreparable on this side of the grave.

W. W.†

110. *Of the Same.*LETTER TO THE REV. THE MASTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE,
CAMBRIDGE.

Friday, Jan. 3 [1840].

MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

It is in times of trouble and affliction that one feels most deeply the strength of the ties of family and nature. We

* *Memoirs*, ii. 358.† *Ibid.* ii. 360.

all most affectionately condole with you, and those who are around you, at this melancholy time. The departed was beloved in this house as he deserved to be; but our sorrow, great as it is for our own sakes, is still heavier for yours and his brothers'. He is a power gone out of our family, and they will be perpetually reminded of it. But the best of all consolations will be with you, with them, with us, and all his numerous relatives and friends, especially with Mrs. Hoare, that his life had been as blameless as man's could well be, and through the goodness of God, he is gone to his reward.

I remain your loving brother,

WM. WORDSWORTH.*

111. *On the Death of a young Person.*†

Rydal Mount, Ambleside, May 21. 1840.

MY DEAR SIR,

Pray impute to anything but a want of due sympathy with you in your affliction my not having earlier given an answer to your letter. In truth, I was so much moved by it, that I had not, at first, sufficient resolution to bring my thoughts so very close to your trouble, as must have been done had I taken up the pen immediately. I have been myself distressed in the same way, though my two children were taken from me at an earlier age, one in her fifth, the other in his seventh year, and within half a year of each other. I can, therefore, enter into your sorrows more feelingly than for others is possible, who have not suffered like losses.

Your departed daughter struck me as having one of the most intelligent and impressive countenances I ever looked upon, and I spoke of her as such to Mrs. Wordsworth, Miss Fenwick, and to others. The indications which I saw in her of a somewhat alarming state of health, I could not but mention to you, when you accompanied me a little way from your own door. You spoke something encouraging; but they continued to haunt me; so that your kind letter was something less of a shock than it would otherwise have been, though not less of a sorrow.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 360-1.

† Ellen Parry (daughter of Dr. Parry), who died April 28, 1840. Wordsworth saw her April 28, 1839. He was again at Summer Hill, Bath, in April 1840.

How pathetic is your account of the piety with which the dear creature supported herself under those severe trials of mind and body with which it pleased God to prepare her for a happier world ! The consolation which *children* and very young persons, who have been religiously brought up, draw from the Holy Scriptures, ought to be habitually on the minds of *adults* of all ages, for the benefit of their own souls, and requires to be treated in a loftier and more comprehensive train of thought and feeling than by writers has been usually bestowed upon it. It does not, therefore, surprise me that you hinted at my own pen being employed upon the subject, as brought before the mind in your lamented daughter's own most touching case. I wish I were equal to anything so holy, but I feel that I am not. It is remarkable, however, that within the last few days the subject has been presented to my mind by two several persons, both unknown to me ; which is something of a proof how widely its importance is felt, and also that there is a feeling that I am not wholly unworthy of treating it.

Your letter, my dear Sir, I value exceedingly, and shall take the liberty, as I have done more than once, with fit reverence, of reading it in quarters where it is likely to do good, or rather, where I know it must do good.

Wishing and praying that the Almighty may bestow upon yourself, the partner in your bereavement, and all the fellow-sufferers in your household, that consolation and support which can proceed only from His grace,

I remain, my dear Dr. Parry,
Most faithfully, your much obliged,
W. WORDSWORTH.*

112. *Religion and Versified Religion.*

LETTER TO THE REV. H. (AFTERWARDS DEAN) ALFORD.

(Postmark) Ambleside, Feb. 21. 1848.

MY DEAR SIR,

Pray excuse my having been some little time in your debt. I could plead many things in extenuation, the chief, that old one of the state of my eyes, which never leaves me at liberty either to read or write a tenth part as much as I could wish, and as otherwise I ought to do.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 362-3.

It cannot but be highly gratifying to me to learn that my writings are prized so highly by a poet and critic of your powers. The essay upon them which you have so kindly sent me seems well qualified to promote your views in writing it. I was particularly pleased with your distinction between religion in poetry, and versified religion. For my own part, I have been averse to frequent mention of the mysteries of Christian faith ; not from a want of a due sense of their momentous nature, but the contrary. I felt it far too deeply to venture on handling the subject as familiarly as many scruple not to do. I am far from blaming them, but let them not blame me, nor turn from my companionship on that account. Besides general reasons for diffidence in treating subjects of Holy Writ, I have some especial ones. I might err in points of faith, and I should not deem my mistakes less to be deprecated because they were expressed in metre. Even Milton, in my humble judgment, has erred, and grievously ; and what poet could hope to atone for his apprehensions* in the way in which that mighty mind has done ?

I am not at all desirous that any one should write an elaborate critique on my poetry.† There is no call for it. If they be from above, they will do their own work in course of time ; if not, they will perish as they ought. But scarcely a week passes in which I do not receive grateful acknowledgments of the good they have done to the minds of the several writers. They speak of the relief they have received from them under affliction and in grief, and of the calmness and elevation of spirit which the poems either give or assist them in attaining. As these benefits are not without a traceable bearing upon the good of the immortal soul, the sooner, perhaps, they are pointed out and illustrated in a work like yours, the better.

Pray excuse my talking so much about myself : your letter and critique called me to the subject. But I assure you it would have been more grateful to me to acknowledge the debt we owe you in this house, where we have read your poems with no common pleasure. Your ‘Abbot of Muchelnage’ also makes me curious to hear more of him.

But I must conclude,
I was truly sorry to have missed you when you and Mrs. Alford

* Sic : qu. ‘Misapprehensions.’ *H. A.*

† Sic : l. ‘Poems.’ *H. A.*

called at Rydal. Mrs. W. unites with me in kind regards to you both; and believe me,

My dear Sir,

Faithfully yours,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

113. Memorandum of a Conversation[†] on Sacred Poetry (by Rev. R. P. Graves).

I must try to give you a summary of a long conversation I had with Wordsworth on the subject of *sacred poetry*, and which I wish I were able to report in full. In the course of it he expressed to me the feelings of reverence which prevented him from venturing to lay his hand on what he always thought a subject too high for him; and he accompanied this with the earnest protest that his works, as well as those of any other poet, should not be considered as developing all the influences which his own heart recognised, but rather those which he considered himself able as an artist to display to advantage, and which he thought most applicable to the wants, and admitted by the usages, of the world at large. This was followed by a most interesting discussion upon Milton, Cowper, the general progress of religion as an element of poetry, and the gradual steps by which it must advance to a power comprehensive and universally admitted; steps which are defined in their order by the constitution of the human mind, and which must proceed with vastly more slowness in the case of the progress made by collective minds, than it does in an individual soul.†

114. Visit of Queen Adelaide to Rydal Mount.

LETTER TO LADY FREDERICK BENTINCK.

July 1840.

I hope, dear Lady Frederick, that nothing will prevent my appearance at Lowther towards the end of next week. But I have for these last few years been visited always with a serious inflammation in my eyes about this season of the year, which causes me to have fears about the fulfilment of any engagement, however agreeable. Pray thank Lord Lonsdale, on my part, for his thinking of me upon this occasion.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 364-6.

† *Ibid.* ii. 366.

On Monday morning, a little before nine, a beautiful and bright day, the Queen Dowager and her sister appeared at Rydal. I met them at the lower waterfall, with which her Majesty seemed much pleased. Upon hearing that it was not more than half a mile to the higher fall, she said, briskly, she would go; though Lord Denbigh and Lord Howe felt that they were pressed for time, having to go upon Keswick Lake, and thence to Paterdale. I walked by the Queen's side up to the higher waterfall, and she seemed to be struck much with the beauty of the scenery. Her step was exceedingly light; but I learned that her health is not good, or rather that she still suffers from the state of her constitution, which caused her to go abroad.

Upon quitting the park of Rydal, nearly opposite our own gate, the Queen was saluted with a pretty rural spectacle; nearly fifty children, drawn up in avenue, with bright garlands in their hands, three large flags flying, and a band of music. They had come from Ambleside, and the garlands were such as are annually prepared at this season for a ceremony called 'the Rush-bearing;' and the parish-clerk of Ambleside hit upon this way of showing at Rydal the same respect to the Queen which had been previously shown at Ambleside. I led the Queen to the principal points of view in our little domain, particularly to that, through the summer house, which shows the lake of Rydal to such advantage. The Queen talked more than once about having a cottage among the lakes, which of course was nothing more than a natural way of giving vent to the pleasure which she had in the country. You will think, I fear, that I have dwelt already too long upon the subject; and I shall therefore only add, that all went off satisfactorily, and that every one was delighted with her Majesty's demeanour. Lord and Lady Sheffield were the only persons of her suite whom I had seen before. Lord Howe was pleased with the sight of the pictures from his friend Sir George Beaumont's pencil, and showed them to the Queen, who, having sat some little time in the house, took her leave, cordially shaking Mrs. Wordsworth by the hand, as a friend of her own rank might have done. She had also inquired for Dora, who was introduced to her. I hope she will come again into the country, and visit Lowther.

Pray excuse the above long story, which I should not have ventured upon, but that you expressed a wish upon the subject.

What enchanting weather ! I hope, and do not doubt, that you all enjoy it, my dear Lady Frederick, as we are doing.

I ought not to forget, that two days ago I went over to see Mr. Southey, or rather Mrs. Southey, for he is past taking pleasure in the presence of any of his friends. He did not recognise me till he was told. Then his eyes flashed for a moment with their former brightness, but he sank into the state in which I had found him, patting with both hands his books affectionately, like a child. Having attempted in vain to interest him by a few observations, I took my leave, after five minutes or so. It was, for me, a mournful visit, and for his poor wife also. His health is good, and he may live many years ; though the body is much enfeebled.

Ever affectionately yours,

WM. WORDSWORTH.

We hope your lameness will soon leave you, that you may ramble about as usual.*

115. *Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues Act, &c.*

LETTER TO THE REV. T. BOYLES MURRAY.

Rydal Mount, Ambleside, Sept. 24. 1840.

DEAR SIR,

Upon returning home after an absence of ten days, I have the pleasure of finding your obliging letter, and the number of the *Ecclesiastical Gazette* containing the ‘Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues Act :’ for both marks of attention I beg you to accept my sincere thanks. As soon as I can find leisure, I will carefully peruse the Act ; at present I can only say that I look upon changes so extensive and searching with a degree of alarm proportionate to my love and affection for the Establishment with which they are connected.

As you have put me in possession of the *Gazette*, I can scarcely feel justified in looking to the fulfilment of your promise to send me the Act, separately printed. Indeed, I feel that it would be giving yourself more trouble than there is occasion for.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 367-9.

It pleases me much to learn that Mrs. Murray and you enjoyed your ramble among the lakes.

Believe me to be, dear Sir, faithfully,

Your obliged servant,

WM. WORDSWORTH.*

116. *Samuel Rogers and Wordsworth together.*

LETTER TO LADY FREDERICK BENTINCK.

Rydal Mount, Sept. 26. 1840.

DEAR LADY FREDERICK,

Mr. Rogers and I had a pleasant journey to Rydal the day we left all our kind friends at Lowther. We alighted at Lyulph's Tower, and saw the waterfall in great power after the night's rain, the sun shining full into the chasm, and making a splendid rainbow of the spray. Afterwards, walking through Mr. Askew's grounds, we saw the lake to the greatest possible advantage. Mr. R. left on Thursday, the morning most beautiful, though it rained afterwards. I know not how he could tear himself away from this lovely country at this charming season. I say charming, notwithstanding this is a dull day; but yesterday was most glorious. I hope our excellent friend does not mean to remain in London.

We have had no visits from strangers since my return, so that the press of the season seems to be over. The leaves are not changed here so much as at Lowther, and of course not yet so beautiful, nor are they ever quite so as with you, your trees being so much finer, and your woods so very much more extensive. We have a great deal of coppice, which makes but a poor show in autumn compared with timber trees.

Your son George knows what he has to expect in the few sheets which I enclose for him.

With many thanks for the endless kind attentions which I received from you, and others under your father's hospitable roof, and with my grateful respects to him, and a thousand good wishes for all, I remain, my wife and daughter joining in these feelings, My dear Lady Frederick, affectionately yours,

WM. WORDSWORTH.†

† *Memoirs*, ii. 369-70.

† *Ibid.* ii. 370-1.

117. *An alarming Accident, Nov. 11, 1840.*

LETTER TO LADY FREDERICK BENTINCK.

Rydal Mount, Monday Evening.

The accident after which you inquire, dear Lady Frederick, with so much feeling, might have been fatal, but through God's mercy we escaped without bodily injury, as far as I know, worth naming. These were the particulars : About three miles beyond Keswick, on the Ambleside road, is a small bridge, from the top of which we got sight of the mail coach coming towards us, at about forty yards' distance, just before the road begins to descend a narrow, steep, and winding slope. Nothing was left for J——, who drove the gig in which we were, but to cross the bridge, and, as the road narrowed up the slope that was in our front, to draw up as close to the wall on our left (our side of the road) as possible. This he did, both of us hoping that the coachman would slacken his pace down the hill, and pass us as far from our wheel as the road would allow. But he did neither. On the contrary, he drove furiously down the hill ; and though, as we afterwards ascertained, by the track of his wheels, he had a yard width of road to spare, he made no use of it. In consequence of this recklessness and his want of skill, the wheel of his coach struck our wheel most violently, drove back our horse and gig some yards, and then sent us all together through a small gap in the wall, with the stones of the wall tumbling about us, into a plantation that lay a yard perpendicular below the level of the road from which the horse and gig, with us in it, had been driven. The shafts were broken off close to the carriage, and we were partly thrown and partly leaped out. After breaking the traces, the horse leaped back into the road and galloped off, the shafts and traces sticking to him ; nor did the poor creature stop till he reached the turnpike at Grasmere, seven miles from the spot where the mischief was done. We sent by the coach for a chaise to take us to Rydal, and hired a cart to take the broken gig to be mended at Keswick.

The mercy was, that the violent shock from the coach did not tear off our wheel ; for if this had been done, J——, and probably I also, must have fallen under the hind wheels of the coach, and in all likelihood been killed. We have since learned

that the coachman had only just come upon the road, which is in a great many places very dangerous, and that he was wholly unpractised in driving four-in-hand. Pray excuse this long and minute account. I should have written to you next day, but I waited, hoping to be able to add that my indisposition was gone, as I now trust it is.

With respectful remembrances to Lord Lonsdale, and kindest regards to yourself and Miss Thompson, I remain,

Dear Lady Frederick,

Affectionately yours,

Wm. WORDSWORTH.*

118. *Of Alston and Haydon, &c.*

LETTER TO HENRY REED, ESQ., PHILADELPHIA.

Rydal Mount, Jan. 13. 1841.

MY DEAR MR. REED,

It is gratifying to learn that through your means Mr. Alston has been reminded of me. We became acquainted many years ago through our common friend Mr. Coleridge, who had seen much of Mr. Alston when they were both living at Rome.

You mention the Sonnet I wrote upon Haydon's picture of the Duke of Wellington. I have known Haydon, and Wilkie also, from their contemporaneous introduction to the world as artists; their powers were perceived and acknowledged by my lamented friend Sir George Beaumont, and patronised by him accordingly; and it was at his house where I first became acquainted with them both. Haydon is bent upon coming to Rydal next summer, with a view to paint a likeness of me, not as a mere matter-of-fact portrait, but one of a poetical character, in which he will endeavour to place his friend in some favourite scene of these mountains. I am rather afraid, I own, of any attempt of this kind, notwithstanding my high opinion of his ability; but if he keeps in his present mind, which I doubt, it will be in vain to oppose his inclination. He is a great enthusiast, possessed also of a most active intellect, but he wants that

* *Memoirs*, ii. 371-3.

submissive and steady good sense which is absolutely necessary for the adequate development of power in that art to which he is attached.

As I am on the subject of painting, it may be worth while to add, that Pickersgill came down last summer to paint a portrait of me for Sir Robert Peel's gallery at Drayton Manor. It was generally thought here that this work was more successful than the one he painted some years ago for St. John's College, at the request of the Master and Fellows.*

119. *Of Peace's 'Apology for Cathedrals.'*

I have no especial reason for writing at this moment of time, but I have long wished to thank you for the 'Apology for Cathedrals,' which I have learned is from your pen. The little work does you great credit; it is full of that wisdom which the heart and imagination alone could adequately supply for such a subject; and is, moreover, very pleasingly diversified by styles of treatment all good in their kind. I need add no more than that I entirely concur in the views you take: but what avails it? the mischief is done, and they who have been most prominent in setting it on foot will have to repent of their narrow comprehension; which, however, is no satisfaction to us, who from the first foresaw the evil tendency of the measure.†

120. *Of 'The Task' of Cowper and Shenstone.*

Though I can make but little use of my eyes in writing or reading, I have lately been reading Cowper's 'Task' aloud; and in so doing was tempted to look over the parallelisms, for which Mr. Southey was in his edition indebted to you. Knowing how comprehensive your acquaintance with poetry is, I was rather surprised that you did not notice the identity of the thought, and accompanying illustrations of it, in a passage of Shenstone's Ode upon Rural Elegance, compared with one in 'The Task,' where Cowper speaks of the inextinguishable love of the country as manifested by the inhabitants of cities in their culture of plants and flowers, where the want of air, cleanliness, and light,

* *Memoirs*, ii. 373-4.

† Extract of letter to John Peace, Esq., Jan. 19, 1841: *Memoirs*, ii. 376.

is so unfavourable to their growth and beauty. The germ of the main thought is to be found in Horace,

' Nempe inter varias nutritur sylva columnas,
Laudaturque domus longos quae prospicit agros;
Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.'

Lib. i. Epist. x. v. 22.

Pray write to me soon. Ever, my dear friend,
Faithfully your obliged,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

121. *On a Tour.*

LETTER TO JOHN PEACE, ESQ.

12 North Parade, Bath, April 19. 1841.

MY DEAR MR. PEACE,

Here I am and have been since last Wednesday evening. I came down the Wye, and passed through Bristol, but arriving there at the moment the railway train was about to set off, and being in the company of four ladies (Miss Fenwick, and Mrs. Wordsworth, and my daughter and niece), I had not a moment to spare, so could not call on you, my good friend, which I truly regretted. Pray spare an hour or two to come here, and then we can fix a day, when, along with my daughter, I can visit Bristol, see you, Mr. Cottle, and Mr. Wade.

All unite in kindest regards.

Ever yours,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.†

122. *Marriage of Dora.*

TO THE SAME.

Bath, May 11. 1841.

MY DEAR MR. PEACE,

This morning my dear daughter was married in St. James's in this place.

To-morrow we leave Bath for Wells, and thence to the old haunts of Mr. Coleridge, and myself, and dear sister, about Alfoxden.

Adieu,

W. W.‡

* Extract of letter to John Peace, Esq., January 19, 1841: *Memoirs*, ii. 376.

† *Memoirs*, ii. 377.

‡ *Ibid.* ii. 378.

123. *Letters to his Brother.*

TO THE REV. DR. WORDSWORTH, MASTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Your affectionate and generous kindness to your, I trust, deserving niece has quite overpowered me and her mother, to whom I could not forbear communicating the contents of your letter.

[The above relates to an act of kindness which the late Master of Trinity had the happiness of performing, on the occasion of Dora Wordsworth's marriage.

The following refers to a serious accident which occurred to him at Cambridge, by a fall from his horse.]

Feb. 16. 1841.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

The good accounts which we receive from time to time of your progress towards perfect recovery from your late severe accident embolden me to congratulate you in my own name, and the whole of my family.

It remains now for us to join heartily, as we all do, in expressing a wish that, being convalescent, you would not be tempted to over-exert yourself. I need scarcely add, that we all unite with you and your sons, with Susan, and your other relations, and all your friends, in fervent thanks to Almighty God for His goodness in preserving you.

As a brother I feel deeply ; and regarding your life as most valuable to the community, I the more rejoice in the prospect of your life being prolonged.

Believe me, my dear Brother,

Most affectionately yours,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

* *Memoirs*, ii. 382-3.

124. *Episcopal Church of America: Emerson and Carlyle.*

TO PROFESSOR REED.

Rydal Mount, Ambleside, Aug. 16. 1841.

MY DEAR MR. REED,

I have lately had the pleasure of seeing, both in London and at my own house, the Bishop of New Jersey. He is a man of no ordinary powers of mind and attainments, of warm feelings and sincere piety. Indeed, I never saw a person of your country, which is remarkable for cordiality, whose manner was so thoroughly cordial. He had been greatly delighted with his reception in England, and what he had seen of it both in Art and Nature. By the by, I heard him preach an excellent sermon in London. I believe this privilege is of modern date. The Bishop has furnished me with his funeral sermon upon Bishop White, to assist me in fulfilling a request which you first made to me, viz. that I would add a Sonnet to my Ecclesiastical Series, upon the union of the two Episcopal churches of England and America.* I will endeavour to do so, when I have more leisure than at present, this being the season when our beautiful region attracts many strangers, who take up much of my time.

Do you know Miss Peabody of Boston? She has just sent me, with the highest eulogy, certain essays of Mr. Emerson. Our Mr. Carlyle and he appear to be what the French used to call *esprits forts*, though the French idols showed their spirit after a somewhat different fashion. Our two present Philosophes, who have taken a language which they suppose to be English for their vehicle, are verily ‘par nobile fratum,’ and it is a pity that the weakness of our age has not left them exclusively to this appropriate reward—mutual admiration. Where is the thing which now passes for philosophy at Boston to stop?

Ever faithfully yours,

Wm. WORDSWORTH.†

* Dr. Seabury was consecrated bishop (of Connecticut) by Scottish bishops at Aberdeen, on 14th November 1784. Dr. White and Dr. Provoost were consecrated bishops (of New York and Pennsylvania) at Lambeth, 4th February 1787.

† *Memoirs*, ii. 383-4.

125. *Old Haunts revisited.*

LETTER TO JOHN PEACE, ESQ.

Rydal Mount, Sept. 4. 1841.

MY DEAR PEACE,

Mrs. W. is quite well. We were three months and as many weeks absent before we reached our own home again. We made a very agreeable tour in Devonshire, going by Exeter to Plymouth, and returning along the coast by Salisbury and Winchester to London. In London and its neighbourhood we stayed not quite a month. During this tour we visited my old haunts at and about Alfoxden and Nethertowey, and at Coleorton, where we stayed several days. These were farewell visits for life, and of course not a little interesting.

Ever faithfully yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.*

126. *No Pension sought.*

In the summer of 1842, Wordsworth resigned his office of Stamp Distributor; not, however, on a retiring pension, as has been sometimes asserted. In a letter, dated March 2, 1840, and addressed to Lord Morpeth, he says, 'I never did seek or accept a pension from the present or any other administration, directly or indirectly.' But the duties, and also the emoluments, of the Distributorship were transferred to his son William, who had for some time acted as his deputy at Carlisle.†

127. *The Master of Trinity.*

LETTER TO A NEPHEW.

Rydal, Nov. 5. 1841.

MY DEAR C——,

Your father left us yesterday, having been just a week under our roof. The weather was favourable, and he seemed to enjoy himself much. His muscular strength, as proved by the walks we took together, is great. One day we were nearly four hours on foot, without resting, and he did not appear in the least fatigued.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 384-5.† *Ibid.* ii. 387.

We all thought him looking well, and his mind appears as active as ever. It was a great delight to us to see him here.

He was anxious to see Charles; he will reach Winchester this afternoon, I hope without injury. Yours, &c.

W. W.*

128. *Of Alston's Portrait of Coleridge.*

Poor Mr. Wade! From his own modest merits, and his long connection with Mr. Coleridge, and with my early Bristol remembrances, he was to me an interesting person. His desire to have my address must have risen, I think, from a wish to communicate with me upon the subject of Mr. Alston's valuable portrait of Coleridge. Pray tell me what has, or is likely to, become of it. I care comparatively little about the matter, provided due care has been taken for its preservation, and in his native country. It would be a sad pity if the late owner's intention of sending it to America be fulfilled. It is the only likeness of the great original that ever gave me the least pleasure; and it is, in fact, most happily executed, as every one who has a distinct remembrance of what C. was at that time must with delight acknowledge, and would be glad to certify.†

129. *Of Southey's Death.*

The papers will have informed you, before you receive this, of poor dear Southey's decease. He died yesterday morning about nine o'clock. Some little time since, he was seized with typhus fever, but he passed away without any outward signs of pain, as gently as possible. We are, of course, not without sadness upon the occasion, notwithstanding there has been, for years, cause why all who knew and loved him should wish for his deliverance.‡

130. *Tropical Scenery : Grace Darling : Southey, &c.*

LETTER TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR WM. GOMM. §

Rydal Mount, March 24. 1843.

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

Nothing should have prevented my answering your

* *Memoirs*, ii. 385.

† Extract of letter to John Peace, Esq., Dec. 12, 1842: *ibid.* ii. 390-1.

‡ Extract of letter to Nephew, March 22, 1843: *ibid.* ii. 391.

§ The venerable and illustrious soldier has only very recently died. Within ten days of his death he wrote the present Editor tenderly and reverentially of Wordsworth. G.

kind letter from the Cape, long ago, but the want of matter that seemed worth sending so far, unless I confined myself to what you must be well assured of, my sincere esteem and regard for yourself and Lady Gomm, and the expression of good wishes for your health and happiness. I am still in the same difficulty, but cannot defer writing longer, lest I should appear to myself unworthy of your friendship or respect.

You describe the beauties of Rio Janeiro in glowing colours, and your animated picture was rendered still more agreeable to me by the sight, which I had enjoyed a little before, of a panorama of the same scene, executed by a friend of mine, who in his youth studied at the Academy with a view to practise painting as a profession. He was a very promising young artist, but having a brother a Brazilian merchant, he changed his purpose and went to Rio, where he resided many years, and made a little fortune, which enabled him to purchase and build in Cumberland, where I saw his splendid portrait of that magnificent region. What an intricacy of waters, and what boldness and fantastic variety in the mountains! I suppose, taking the region as a whole, it is scarcely anywhere surpassed.

If the different quarters of the globe should ever become subject to one empire, Rio ought to be the metropolis, it is so favoured in every respect, and so admirably placed for intercourse with all the countries of the earth. Your approach to the Cape was under awful circumstances, and, with three great wrecks strewn along the coast of the bay, Lady Gomm's spirit and fortitude, as described by you, are worthy of all admiration, and I am sure she will sympathise with the verses I send, to commemorate a noble exploit of one of her sex. The inhumanity with which the shipwrecked were lately treated upon the French coast impelled me to place in contrast the conduct of an English woman and her parents under like circumstances, as it occurred some years ago. Almost immediately after I had composed my tribute to the memory of *Grace Darling*, I learnt that the Queen and Queen Dowager had both just subscribed towards the erection of a monument to record her heroism, upon the spot that witnessed it.

Of public news I say nothing, as you will hear everything from quarters more worthy of attention. I hope all goes on to your satisfaction, mainly so at least, in your new government,

and that the disposition which you will have taken with you to benefit the people under your rule has not been, nor is likely to be, frustrated in any vexatious or painful degree.

Yesterday I went over to Keswick to attend the funeral of my excellent friend, Mr. Southey. His genius and abilities are well known to the world, and he was greatly valued for his generous disposition and moral excellence. His illness was long and afflicting; his mind almost extinguished years before the breath departed. Mr. Rogers I have not been in communication with since I saw you in London, but be assured I shall bear in memory your message, and deliver it, if he and I live to meet again. And now, my dear Sir Wm., repeating the united best good wishes of Mrs. W. and myself, for you and Lady Gomm, and for your safe return to your own country, I remain, in the hope of hearing from you again,

Most faithfully your much obliged,

W. WORDSWORTH.

My nephew is still in the Ionian Islands.*

131. *Contemporary Poets : Southey's Death : 'The Excursion,'
&c.*

TO PROFESSOR REED.

Rydal Mount, March 27. 1843.

MY DEAR MR. REED,

You give me pleasure by the interest you take in the various passages in which I speak of the poets, my contemporaries, who are no more: dear Southey, one of the most eminent, is just added to the list. A few days ago I went over to Keswick to attend his remains to their last earthly abode. For upwards of three years his mental faculties have been in a state of deplorable decay; and his powers of recognition, except very rarely and but for a moment, have been, during more than half that period, all but extinct. His bodily health was grievously impaired, and his medical attendant says that he must have died long since but for the very great strength of his natural constitution. As to his literary remains, they must be very considerable, but, except his epistolary correspondence, more or

* *Memoirs*, ii. 392-4.

less unfinished. His letters cannot but be very numerous, and, if carefully collected and judiciously selected, will, I doubt not, add greatly to his reputation. He had a fine talent for that species of composition, and took much delight in throwing off his mind in that way. Mr. Taylor, the dramatic author, is his literary executor.

Though I have written at great, and I fear tiresome, length, I will add a few words upon the wish you express that I would pay a tribute to the English poets of past ages, who never had the fame they are entitled to, and have long been almost entirely neglected. Had this been suggested to me earlier in life, or had it come into my thoughts, the thing in all probability would have been done. At present I cannot hope it will; but it may afford you some satisfaction to be told, that in the ms. poem upon my poetic education there is a whole book, of about 600 lines,* upon my obligations to writers of imagination, and chiefly the poets, though I have not expressly named those to whom you allude, and for whom, and many others of their age, I have a high respect.

The character of the schoolmaster, about whom you inquire, had, like the 'Wanderer,' in 'The Excursion,' a solid foundation in fact and reality, but, like him, it was also, in some degree, a composition: I will not, and need not, call it an invention—it was no such thing; but were I to enter into details, I fear it would impair the effect of the whole upon your mind; nor could I do it to my own satisfaction. I send you, according to your wish, the additions to the 'Ecclesiastical Sonnets,' and also the last poem from my pen. I threw it off two or three weeks ago, being in a great measure impelled to it by the desire I felt to do justice to the memory of a heroine, whose conduct presented, some time ago, a striking contrast to the inhumanity with which our countrymen, shipwrecked lately upon the French coast, have been treated.

Ever most faithfully yours,

WM. WORDSWORTH.

I must request that 'Grace Darling' may not be reprinted. I should be much obliged if you will have the enclosed Sonnets copied and sent to Bishop Doane, who has not given me his address.

W. W.†

* Prelude, book v.

† *Memoirs*, ii. 394-6.

132. *Offer of the Laureateship on Death of Southey.*

LETTER TO THE RIGHT HON. EARL DE LA WARR,
LORD CHAMBERLAIN.

Rydal Mount, Ambleside, April 1. 1843.

MY LORD,

The recommendation made by your Lordship to the Queen, and graciously approved by her Majesty, that the vacant office of Poet Laureate should be offered to me, affords me high gratification. Sincerely am I sensible of this honour; and let me be permitted to add, that the being deemed worthy to succeed my lamented and revered friend, Mr. Southey, enhances the pleasure I receive upon this occasion.

The appointment, I feel, however, imposes duties which, far advanced in life as I am, I cannot venture to undertake, and therefore must beg leave to decline the acceptance of an offer that I shall always remember with no unbecoming pride.

Her Majesty will not, I trust, disapprove of a determination forced upon me by reflections which it is impossible for me to set aside.

Deeply feeling the distinction conferred upon me, and grateful for the terms in which your Lordship has made the communication,

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

W. W.

[He thus communicates the particulars of the offer to Lady F. Bentinek :]

The Lord Chamberlain, in terms the most honourable, has, with the Queen's approbation, offered me the vacant Laureateship. Had I been several years younger I should have accepted the office with pride and pleasure; but on Friday I shall enter, God willing, my 74th year, and on account of so advanced an age I begged permission to decline it, not venturing to undertake its duties. For though, as you are aware, the formal task-work of New Year and Birthday Odes was abolished* when the

* Southey's account in his *Life and Correspondence* renders this statement questionable.

appointment was given to Mr. Southey, he still considered himself obliged in conscience to produce, and did produce, verses, some of very great merit, upon important public occasions. He failed to do so upon the Queen's Coronation, and I know that this omission caused him no little uneasiness. The same might happen to myself upon some important occasion, and I should be uneasy under the possibility; I hope, therefore, that neither you nor Lord Lonsdale, nor any of my friends, will blame me for what I have done.

I was slow to send copies of 'Grace Darling' about, except to female friends, lest I should seem to attach too much importance to the production, though it was on a subject which interested the whole nation. But as the verses seem to have given general pleasure, I now venture to send the enclosed copies, one for Mr. Colvill, and the other for my old friend Mr. O'Callaghan, begging that you would present them at your own convenience. With the best of good wishes, and every kind and respectful remembrance to Lord Lonsdale, who we are happy to learn is doing so well, and also not forgetting Miss Thompson, I remain, dear Lady Frederick,

Most faithfully and affectionately yours,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.

[Wordsworth's letter did not, however, prevent the Lord Chamberlain from pressing the offer upon him, with an assurance that the duties of Laureate had not recently extended beyond the Annual Ode, and might in his case be considered as merely nominal, and would not in any way interfere with his repose and retirement.]

The same post brought also the following letter:]

' Whitehall, April 3. 1843.

' MY DEAR SIR,

' I hope you may be induced to reconsider your decision with regard to the appointment of Poet Laureate.

' The offer was made to you by the Lord Chamberlain, with my entire concurrence, not for the purpose of imposing on you any onerous or disagreeable duties, but in order to pay you that tribute of respect which is justly due to the first of living poets.

' The Queen entirely approved of the nomination, and there is one unanimous feeling on the part of all who have heard of

the proposal (and it is pretty generally known), that there could not be a question about the selection.

‘ Do not be deterred by the fear of any obligations which the appointment may be supposed to imply. I will undertake that you shall have nothing *required* from you.

‘ But as the Queen can select for this honourable appointment no one whose claims for respect and honour, on account of eminence as a poet, can be placed in competition with yours, I trust you will not longer hesitate to accept it.

‘ Believe me, my dear Sir,

‘ With sincere esteem,

‘ Most faithfully yours,

‘ ROBERT PEEL.

‘ I write this in haste, from my place in the House of Commons.’

[These letters had the desired effect in removing the aged Poet’s scruples, and he was well pleased that the laureate wreath should be twined round his silver hair :

‘ Lauru cinge volens, Melpomene, comam.’

He replied as follows :]

TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL DE LA WARR.

Rydal Mount, Ambleside, April 4. 1843.

MY LORD,

Being assured by your Lordship’s letter and by one from Sir Robert Peel, both received this day, that the appointment to the Laureateship is to be considered merely honorary, the apprehensions which at first compelled me to decline accepting the offer of that appointment are entirely removed.

Sir Robert Peel has also done me the honour of uniting his wish with that which your Lordship has urged in a manner most gratifying to my feelings ; so that, under these circumstances, and sanctioned as the recommendation has been by her Majesty’s gracious approval, it is with unalloyed pleasure that I accept this high distinction.

I have the honour to be, my Lord, most gratefully,

Your Lordship’s obedient humble servant,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

TO THE RT. HON. SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART., M.P.

Rydal Mount, Ambleside, April 4. 1843.

DEAR SIR ROBERT,

Having since my first acquaintance with Horace borne in mind the charge which he tells us frequently thrilled his ear,

‘Solve senescentem mature sanus equum, ne
Pecchet ad extremum,’

I could not but be deterred from incurring responsibilities which I might not prove equal to at so late a period of life; but as my mind has been entirely set at ease by the very kind and most gratifying letter with which you have honoured me, and by a second communication from the Lord Chamberlain to the same effect, and in a like spirit, I have accepted, with unqualified pleasure, a distinction sanctioned by her Majesty, and which expresses, upon authority entitled to the highest respect, a sense of the national importance of poetic literature; and so favourable an opinion of the success with which it has been cultivated by one who, after this additional mark of your esteem, cannot refrain from again assuring you how deeply sensible he is of the many and great obligations he owes to your goodness, and who has the honour to be,

Dear Sir Robert,

Most faithfully,

Your humble servant,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

133. Laureateship: Walter Savage Landor and Quillinan: Godson.

LETTER TO SIR W. R. HAMILTON, DUBLIN.

[Undated: but 1843.]

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

The sight of your handwriting was very welcome, and not the less so because your sister had led me to expect a letter from you.

The Laureateship was offered to me in the most flattering terms, by the Lord Chamberlain, of course with the approbation of the Queen; but I declined it on account of my advanced age. I then received a second letter from his Lordship, urging my acceptance of it, and assuring me that it was intended merely as an honorary distinction for the past, without the smallest reference

to any service to be attached to it. From Sir R. Peel I had also a letter to the same effect, and the substance and manner of both were such that if I had still rejected the offer, I should have been little at peace with my own mind.

Thank you for your translations. The longer poem* would have given me more pain than pleasure, but for your addition, which sets all right.

The attack upon W. S. L. to which you allude was written by my son-in-law; but without any sanction from me, much less encouragement; in fact I knew nothing about it or the preceding article of Landor, that had called it forth, till after Mr. Q.'s had appeared. He knew very well that I should have disapproved of his condescending to notice anything that a man so deplorably tormented by ungovernable passion as that unhappy creature might eject. His character may be given in two or three words: a mad-man, a bad-man, yet a man of genius, as many a mad-man is. I have not eyesight to spare for Periodical Literature, so with exception of a newspaper now and then, I never look into anything of the kind, except some particular article may be recommended to me by a friend upon whose judgment I can rely.

You are quite at liberty to print when and where you like any verses which you may do me the honour of writing upon, or addressing to, me.

Your godson, his sister, and four brothers, are all doing well. He is a very clever boy, and more than that, being of an original or rather peculiar structure of intellect, and his heart appears to be not inferior to his head, so that I trust he will as a man do you no discredit.

134. *Alston the Painter: Home Occupations.*

LETTER TO PROFESSOR REED.

Rydal Mount, Aug. 2. 1843.

MY DEAR MR. REED,

A few days ago I received a letter from a countryman of yours, the Rev. R. C. Waterston of Boston, communicating the intelligence of the death of that admirable artist and amiable man, my old friend, Mr. Alston. Mr. W. and I are not acquainted,

* Referring to a translation by Sir W. R. H. of *Die Ideale* of Schiller, to which a stanza was added by Sir W.—G.

and therefore I take it very kindly that he should have given me this melancholy information, with most interesting particulars of the last few hours of the life of the deceased. He also sent me a copy of verses addressed by himself to me, I presume some little time ago, and printed in the 'Christian Souvenir.' You have probably seen the lines, and, if so, I doubt not you will agree with me that they indicate a true feeling of the leading characteristics of my poems. At least I am sure that I wished them such as he represents them to be, too partially no doubt.

It would give me pleasure could I make this letter, so long due, more worthy of perusal, by touching upon any topics of a public or private nature that might interest you ; but beyond the assurance which I can give you, that I and mine are and have been in good health, I know not where to find them. This Spring I have not left home for London, or anywhere else ; and during the progress of it and the Summer I have had much pleasure in noting the flowers and blossoms, as they appeared and disappeared successively ; an occupation from which, at least with reference to my own grounds, a residence in town for the three foregoing Spring seasons cut me off. Though my health continues, thank God, to be very good, and I am active as most men of my age, my strength for very long walks among the mountains is of course diminishing ; but, weak or strong in body, I shall ever remain, in heart and mind,

Faithfully, your much obliged friend,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.

P.S. Mr. Southey's literary executors are making a collection of his letters, which will prove highly interesting to the public, they are so gracefully and feelingly written.*

135. Socinianism.

LETTER TO JOSEPH COTTLER, ESQ.

Nov. 24. 1843.

MY DEAR MR. COTTLER,

You have treated the momentous subject† of So-

* *Memoirs*, ii. 404-5.

† The title of Mr. J. Cottle's work is *Essays on Socinianism*, by Joseph Cottle. Lond.: Longmans.

cinianism in a masterly manner; entirely and absolutely convincing.

Believe me to remain, my good old friend,

With great respect,

Faithfully yours,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

136. *Sacred Hymns.*

LETTER TO THE REV. (AFTERWARDS DEAN) HENRY
ALFORD.†

Rydal Mount, Feb. 28. 1844.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am pleased to hear what you are about, but I am far too advanced in life to venture upon anything so difficult to do as hymns of devotion.

The one of mine which you allude to is quite at your service; only I could wish the first line of the fifth stanza to be altered thus:

‘Each field is then a hallowed spot.’

Or you might omit the stanza altogether, if you thought proper, the piece being long enough without it.

Wishing heartily for your success, and knowing in what able hands the work is,

I remain, my dear Sir,

Faithfully yours,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.‡

137. *Bereavements.*

LETTER TO LADY FREDERICK BENTINCK.

March 31. 1844.

MY DEAR LADY FREDERICK,

We have known each other too long and too intimately for you not to be well aware of the reasons why I have not earlier condoled with you upon your bereavement.§ I feel it deeply, and sympathise with you as much and as truly as you possibly could wish. I have also grieved for the rest of your family

* *Memoirs*, ii. 405-6.

† This was written in answer to an inquiry whether Wordsworth had by him any hymns calculated for a collection which I was making, and asking permission to insert his ‘Noonday Hymn.’ *H. A.*

‡ *Memoirs*, ii. 406.

§ Lord Lonsdale’s death.

and household, and not the least for Miss Thompson, whose faithful and strong attachment to your revered father I have, for a long time, witnessed with delight and admiration. Through my kind friend Mr. O'Brien I have heard of you both; and in his second letter he informs me, to my great sorrow, that Miss Thompson has been exceedingly ill. God grant that she may soon recover, as you both will stand in need of all your bodily strength to support you under so sad a loss. But, how much is there to be thankful for in every part of Lord Lonsdale's life to its close! How gently was he dealt with in his last moments! and with what fortitude and Christian resignation did he bear such pains as attended his decline, and prepared the way for his quiet dissolution! Of my own feelings upon this loss I shall content myself with saying, that as long as I retain consciousness I shall cherish the memory of your father, for his inestimable worth, and as one who honoured me with his friendship, and who was to myself and my children the best benefactor. The sympathy which I now offer, dear Lady Frederick, is shared by my wife and my daughter, and my son William; and will be also participated in by my elder son, when he hears of the sad event.

I wrote to Dr. Jackson* to inquire whether the funeral was to be strictly private, and learnt from him that it is to be so; otherwise I should not have deprived myself of the melancholy satisfaction of attending. Accept, dear Lady Frederick, my best wishes; and be assured of my prayers for your support; and believe me,

Your very affectionate friend,

WM. WORDSWORTH.†

138. *Birthday in America and at Home: Church Poetry.*

LETTER TO PROFESSOR REED.

1844.

In your last letter you speak so feelingly of the manner in which my birthday (April 7) has been noticed, both privately in your country, and somewhat publicly in my own neighbourhood, that I cannot forbear adding a word or two upon the subject. It would have delighted you to see the assemblage in front of our house, some dancing upon the gravel

* The respected Rector of Lowther, and Chancellor of the Diocese.

† *Memoirs*, ii. 407-8.

platform, old and young, as described in Goldsmith's travels ; and others, children, I mean, chasing each other upon the little plot of lawn to which you descend by steps from the platform. We had music of our own preparing ; and two sets of casual itinerants, Italians and Germans, came in successively, and enlivened the festivity. There were present upwards of 300 children, and about 150 adults of both sexes and all ages, the children in their best attire, and of that happy and, I may say, beautiful race, which is spread over this highly-favoured portion of England. The tables were tastefully arranged in the open air*—oranges and gingerbread in piles decorated with evergreens and Spring flowers ; and all partook of tea, the young in the open air, and the old within doors. I must own I wish that little commemorations of this kind were more common among us. It is melancholy to think how little that portion of the community which is quite at ease in their circumstances have to do in a *social* way with the humbler classes. They purchase commodities of them, or they employ them as labourers, or they visit them in charity for the sake of supplying their most urgent wants by almsgiving. But this, alas, is far from enough ; one would wish to see the rich mingle with the poor as much as may be upon a footing of fraternal equality. The old feudal dependencies and relations are almost gone from England, and nothing has yet come adequately to supply their place. There are tendencies of the right kind here and there, but they are rather accidental than aught that is established in general manners. Why should not great land-owners look for a substitute for what is lost of feudal paternity in the higher principles of christianised humanity and humble-minded brotherhood ? And why should not this extend to those vast communities which crowd so many parts of England under one head, in the different sorts of manufacture, which, for the want of it, are too often the pests of the social state ? We are, however, improving, and I trust that the example set by some mill-owners will not fail to influence others.

It gave me pleasure to be told that Mr. Keble's Dedication of his 'Praelectiones' had fallen in your way, and that you had been struck by it.* It is not for me to say how far I am

* The fête was given by Miss Fenwick, then at Rydal.

† See *Memoirs*, c. xlvi.

entitled to the honour which he has done me, but I can sincerely say that it has been the main scope of my writings to do what he says I have accomplished. And where could I find a more trustworthy judge?

What you advise in respect to a separate publication of my Church Poetry, I have often turned in my own mind; but I have really done so little in that way compared with the magnitude of the subject, that I have not courage to venture on such a publication. Besides, it would not, I fear, pay its expenses. The Sonnets were so published upon the recommendation of a deceased nephew of mine, one of the first scholars of Europe, and as good as he was learned. The volume did not, I believe, clear itself, and a great part of the impression, though latterly offered at a reduced price, still remains, I believe, in Mr. Moxon's hands. In this country people who do not grudge laying out their money for new publications on personal or fugitive interests, that every one is talking about, are very unwilling to part with it for literature which is unindebted to temporary excitement. If they buy such at all, it must be in some form for the most part that has little to recommend it but low price.

And now, my dear Sir, with many thanks for the trouble you have been at, and affectionate wishes for your welfare,

Believe me faithfully yours,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

139. *Class-fellows and School-fellows.*

LETTER TO BASIL MONTAGU, ESQ.

Rydal Mount, Oct. 1. 1844.

MY DEAR MONTAGU,

Absence from home has prevented my replying earlier to your letter, which gave me much pleasure on many accounts, and particularly as I learned from it that you are so industrious, and to such good effect. I don't wonder at your mention of the friends whom we have lost by death. Bowles the poet still lives, and Rogers—all that survive of the poetical fraternity with whom I have had any intimacy. Southey, Campbell, and Cary, are no more. Of my class-fellows and school-fellows very few remain; my *intimate* associates of my own col-

* *Memoirs*, ii. 408-10.

lege are all gone long since. Myers my cousin, Terrot, Jones my fellow-traveller, Fleming and his brother Raincock of Pembroke, Bishop Middleton of the same college—it has pleased God that I should survive them all. Then there are none left but Joseph Cottle of the many friends I made at Bristol and in Somersetshire; yet we are only in our 75th year. But enough of this sad subject; let us be resigned under all dispensations, and thankful; for that is our duty, however difficult it may be to perform it. I send you the lock of hair which you desired, white as snow, and taken from a residue which is thinning rapidly.

You neither mention your own health nor Mrs. Montagu's; I conclude, therefore, that both of you are doing well. Pray remember me kindly to her; and believe me, my dear Montagu, your faithful and affectionate friend,

WM. WORDSWORTH.

In speaking of our Bristol friends I forgot to mention John Pinney, but him I have neither seen nor heard of for many years.*

140. '*From Home:*' *The Queen: Review of Poems, &c.*

LETTER TO PROFESSOR REED.

Nov. 18. 1844.

MY DEAR MR. REED,

Mrs. Wordsworth and I have been absent from home for a month past, and we deferred acknowledging your acceptable letter till our return. Among the places to which we went on visits to our friends was Cambridge, where I was happy to learn that great improvement was going on among the young men. They were become much more regular in their conduct, and attentive to their duties. Our host was the master of Trinity College, Dr. Whewell, successor to my brother, Dr. Wordsworth, who filled the office for more than twenty years highly to his honour, and resigned before he was disqualified by age, lest, as his years advanced, his judgment might be impaired, and his powers become unfit for the responsibility without his being aware of it. This, you will agree with me, was a noble example: may it be followed by others!

On our return home we were detained two hours at Northampton by the vast crowd assembled to greet the Queen on her

* *Memoirs*, ii. 411-12.

way to Burleigh House. Shouts and ringing of bells there were in abundance ; but these are things of course. It did please us, however, greatly to see every village we passed through for the space of twenty-two miles decorated with triumphal arches, and every cottage, however humble, with its little display of laurel boughs and flowers hung from the windows and over the doors. The people, young and old, were all making it holiday, and the Queen could not but be affected with these universal manifestations of affectionate loyalty. As I have said, we were detained two hours, and I much regret that it did not strike me at the moment to throw off my feelings in verse, for I had ample time to have done so, and might, perhaps, have contrived to present through some of the authorities the tribute to my Royal Mistress. How must these words shock your republican ears ! But you are too well acquainted with mankind and their history not to be aware that love of country can clothe itself in many shapes.

I need not say what pleasure it would give us to see you and Mrs. Reed in our beautiful place of abode.

I have no wish to see the review of my poems to which you allude, nor should I read it if it fell in my way. It is too late in life for me to profit by censure, and I am indifferent to praise merely as such. Mrs. Wordsworth will be happy to write her opinion of the portrait as you request.

Believe me, my dear Mr. Reed,

Faithfully yours,

WM. WORDSWORTH.*

141. *The Laureateship : Contemporaries, &c. : Tennyson.*

LETTER TO PROFESSOR REED.

Rydal Mount, Ambleside, July 1. 1845.

MY DEAR MR. REED,

I have, as usual, been long in your debt, which I am pretty sure you will excuse as heretofore. It gave me much pleasure to have a glimpse of your brother under circumstances which no doubt he will have described to you. He spoke of his health as improved, and I hope it will continue to do so. I understood from him that it was probable he should call at Rydal before his return to his own country. I need not say to you I

shall be glad, truly glad, to see him both for his own sake, and as so nearly connected with you. My absence from home lately was not of more than three weeks. I took the journey to London solely to pay my respects to the Queen upon my appointment to the Laureateship upon the decease of my friend Mr. Southey. The weather was very cold, and I caught an inflammation in one of my eyes, which rendered my stay in the south very uncomfortable. I nevertheless did, in respect to the object of my journey, all that was required. The reception given me by the Queen at her ball was most gracious. Mrs. Everett, the wife of your minister, among many others, was a witness to it, without knowing who I was. It moved her to the shedding of tears. This effect was in part produced, I suppose, by American habits of feeling, as pertaining to a republican government. To see a grey-haired man of seventy-five years of age, kneeling down in a large assembly to kiss the hand of a young woman, is a sight for which institutions essentially democratic do not prepare a spectator of either sex, and must naturally place the opinions upon which a republic is founded, and the sentiments which support it, in strong contrast with a government based and upheld as ours is. I am not, therefore, surprised that Mrs. Everett was moved, as she herself described to persons of my acquaintance, among others to Mr. Rogers the poet. By the by, of this gentleman, now I believe in his eighty-third year, I saw more than of any other person except my host, Mr. Moxon, while I was in London. He is singularly fresh and strong for his years, and his mental faculties (with the exception of his memory a little) not at all impaired. It is remarkable that he and the Rev. W. Bowles were both distinguished as poets when I was a school-boy, and they have survived almost all their eminent contemporaries, several of whom came into notice long after them. Since they became known, Burns, Cowper, Mason the author of 'Caractacus' and friend of Gray, have died. Thomas Warton, Laureate, then Byron, Shelley, Keats, and a good deal later* Scott, Coleridge,

Walter Scott	.	.	.	.	died 21st Sept. 1832.
S. T. Coleridge	.	.	.	.	„ 25th July 1834.
Charles Lamb	.	.	.	.	„ 27th Dec. 1834.
Geo. Crabbe	.	.	.	.	„ 3rd Feb. 1832.
Felicia Hemans	.	.	.	.	„ 16th May 1835.
Robert Southey	.	.	.	.	„ 21st March 1843.

Crabbe, Southey, Lamb, the Ettrick Shepherd, Cary the translator of Dante, Crowe the author of 'Lewesdon Hill,' and others of more or less distinction, have disappeared. And now of English poets, advanced in life, I cannot recall any but James Montgomery, Thomas Moore, and myself, who are living, except the octogenarian with whom I began.

I saw Tennyson, when I was in London, several times. He is decidedly the first of our living poets, and I hope will live to give the world still better things. You will be pleased to hear that he expressed in the strongest terms his gratitude to my writings. To this I was far from indifferent, though persuaded that he is not much in sympathy with what I should myself most value in my attempts, viz. the spirituality with which I have endeavoured to invest the material universe, and the moral relations under which I have wished to exhibit its most ordinary appearances. I ought not to conclude this first portion of my letter without telling you that I have now under my roof a cousin, who some time ago was introduced, improperly, I think, she being then a child, to the notice of the public, as one of the English poetesses, in an article of the *Quarterly* so entitled. Her name is Emmeline Fisher, and her mother is my first cousin. What advances she may have made in latter years I do not know, but her productions from the age of eight to twelve were not less than astonishing. She only arrived yesterday, and we promise ourselves much pleasure in seeing more of her. Our dear friend Miss Fenwick is also under our roof; so is Katharine Southey, her late father's youngest daughter, so that we reckon ourselves rich; though our only daughter is far from us, being gone to Oporto with her husband on account of her enfeebled frame: and most unfortunately, soon after her arrival, she was seized with a violent attack of rheumatic fever caused by exposure to the evening air. We have also been obliged lately to part with four grandsons, very fine boys, who are gone with their father to Italy to visit their mother, kept there by severe illness, which sent her abroad two years ago. Under these circumstances we old people keep our spirits as well as we can, trusting the end to God's goodness.

Now, for the enclosed poem,* which I wrote the other day,

* The poem enclosed is 'The Westmoreland Girl,' dated June 6, 1845. The text corresponds with that in the one volume edition, with the exception of the

and which I send to you, hoping it may give you some pleasure, as a scanty repayment for all that we owe you. Our dear friend, Miss Fenwick, is especially desirous that her warmest thanks should be returned to you for all the trouble you have taken about her bonds. But, to return to the verses: if you approve, pray forward them with my compliments and thanks for his letter to ——. In his letter he states that with others he is strenuously exerting himself in endeavours to abolish slavery, and, as one of the means of disposing the public mind to that measure, he is about to publish selections from various authors in behalf of *humanity*. He begs an original composition from me. I have nothing bearing directly upon slavery, but if you think this little piece would serve his cause indirectly, pray be so kind as to forward it to him. He speaks of himself as deeply indebted to my writings.

I have not left room to subscribe myself more than

Affectionately yours,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

142. ‘*Poems of Imagination:*’ New Edition, &c.: Portrait, &c.

LETTER TO PROFESSOR REED.

Brinsop Court, Sept. 27 [1845].

MY DEAR MR. REED,

The sight of your letter was very welcome, and its contents proved most agreeable. It was well that you did not forward my little poem to the party, he entertaining the opinions he holds, and being of the character you describe. I shall therefore be gratified if you, as you propose, write him a note, expressing that I have nothing among my mss. that would suit his purpose. The verses are already printed in the new edition of my poems (double column), which is going through the press. It will contain about 300 verses not found in the previous edition. I do not remember whether I have mentioned to you that, following your example, I have greatly extended the class entitled ‘Poems of the Imagination,’ thinking, as you must have done, that if imagination were predominant in the class, it was not

two stanzas added in the next letter; and in the 1st stanza ‘thoughtless’ has been substituted for ‘simple;’ and in the 18th ‘is laid’ for ‘must lie.’ H. R.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 414-17.

indispensable that it should pervade every poem which it contained. Limiting the class as I had done before seemed to imply, and to the uncandid or unobserving it did so, that the faculty, which is the *primum mobile* in poetry, had little to do, in the estimation of the author, with the pieces not arranged under that head. I, therefore, feel much obliged to you for suggesting by your practice the plan which I have adopted. In respect to the Prefaces, my own wish would be that now the Poems should be left to speak for themselves without them; but I know that this would not answer for the purposes of sale. They will, therefore, be printed at the end of the volume; and to this I am in some degree reconciled by the matter they contain relating to poetry in general, and the principles they inculcate. I hope that, upon the whole, the edition will please you. In a very few instances I have altered the expression for the worse, on account of the same feeling or word occurring rather too near the passage. For example, the Sonnet on Baptism begins '*Blest* be the Church.' But unfortunately the word occurs some three or four lines just before or after; I have, therefore, though reluctantly, substituted the less impressive word, '*Dear* be the Church.' I mention this solely to prevent blame on your part in this and a few similar cases where an injurious change has been made. The book will be off my hands I hope in about two weeks.

Mrs. Wordsworth and I left home four days ago, and do not intend to return, if all goes well, in less than five or six weeks from this time. We purpose in our way home to visit York, the cathedral of which city has been restored; and then we shall go to Leeds, on a visit to our friend Mr. James Marshall, in full expectation that we shall be highly delighted by the humane and judicious manner in which his manufactory is managed, and by inspecting the schools which he and his brother have established and superintended. We also promise ourselves much pleasure from the sight of the magnificent church, which, upon the foundation of the old parish church of that town, has been built through the exertions and by the munificence of the present incumbent, that excellent and able man Dr. Hook, whom I have the honour of reckoning among my friends.

This letter is written by the side of my brother-in-law, who, eight years ago, became a cripple, confined to his chair, by the

accident of his horse falling with him in the high road, where he lay without power to move either hand or leg, but left in perfect possession of his faculties. His bodily sufferings are by this time somewhat abated, but they still continue severe. His patience and cheerfulness are so admirable that I could not forbear mentioning him to you. He is an example to us all ; and most undeserving should we be if we did not profit by it. His family have lately succeeded in persuading him to have his portrait taken as he sits in his arm-chair. It is an excellent likeness, one of the best I ever saw, and will be invaluable to his family. This reminds me of Mr. Inman and a promise which he made that he would send us a copy of your portrait of myself. I say a promise, though it scarcely amounted to that absolutely, but it was little short of it. Do you think he could find time to act upon his own wish in this matter ? in which I feel interested on Mrs. Wordsworth's account, who reckons that portrait much the best both as to likeness and execution of all that have been made of me, and she is an excellent judge. In adverting to this subject, I of course presume that you would have no objection to the picture being copied if the artist were inclined to do it.

My paper admonishes me that I must conclude. Pray let me know in your next how Mrs. Reed and your family are in health, and present my good wishes to her.

Ever your faithful and much obliged friend,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

143. *Of the College of Maynooth, &c.*

LETTER TO A NEPHEW.

Rydal Mount, June 30. 1845.

MY DEAR C——,

I ought to have acknowledged my debt to you long ago, but the inflammation in one of my eyes which seized me on my first arrival in London kept its ground for a long time. I had your two first pamphlets read to me, and immediately put them into circulation among my friends in this neighbourhood ; but wishing to read them myself I did not like to write to you till I had done so, as there were one or two passages on which I wished to make a remark.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 418-21.

As to your arguments, they are unanswerable, and the three tracts do you the greatest possible credit; but the torrent cannot be stemmed, unless we can construct a body, I will not call it a party, upon a new and true principle of action, as you have set forth. Certain questions are forced by the present conduct of government upon the mind of every observing and thinking person. First and foremost, are we to have a *national English Church*, or is the Church of England to be regarded merely as a sect? and is the *right to the Throne to be put on a new foundation?* Is the present ministry prepared for this, and all that must precede and follow it? Is Ireland an integral and inseparable portion of the Empire or not? If it be, I cannot listen to the argument in favour of endowing Romanism upon the ground of superiority of *numbers*. The Romanists are not a majority in England and Ireland, taken, as they ought to be, together. As to Scotland, it has its separate kirk by especial covenant. Are the ministers prepared to alter fundamentally the basis of the Union between England and Ireland, and to construct a new one? If they be, let them tell us so at once. In short, they are involving themselves and the Nation in difficulties from which there is no escape—for them at least none. What I have seen of your letter to Lord John M—— I like as well as your two former tracts, and I shall read it carefully at my first leisure moment.*

144. *Of the 'Heresiarch of the Church of Rome.'*

LETTER TO JOSEPH COTTLE, ESQ.

Rydal Mount, Dec. 6. 1845.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

Now for your little tract, ‘Heresiarch Church of Rome.’ I have perused it carefully, and go the whole length with you in condemnation of Romanism, and probably *much further*, by reason of my having passed at least three years of life in countries where Romanism was the prevailing or exclusive religion; and if we are to trust the declaration ‘By their fruits ye shall know them,’ I have stronger reasons, in the privilege I have named, for passing a severe condemnation upon leading parts of their faith, and courses of their practice, than others

* *Memoirs*, ii. 151-2.

who have never been eye-witnesses of the evils to which I allude. Your little publication is well timed, and will I trust have such an effect as you aimed at upon the minds of its readers.

And now let me bid you affectionately good bye, with assurance that I do and shall retain to the last a remembrance of your kindness, and of the many pleasant and happy hours which, at one of the most interesting periods of my life, I passed in your neighbourhood, and in your company.

Ever most faithfully yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.*

145. *Family Trials.*

LETTER TO PROFESSOR REED.

Rydal Mount, Jan. 23. 1846.

MY DEAR MR. REED,

I hope to be able to send you an impression of an engraving, from a picture of Mr. Haydon; representing me in the act of climbing Helvellyn. There is great merit in this work, and the sight of it will show my meaning on the subject of *expression*. This, I think, is attained ; but, then, I am stooping, and the inclination of the head necessarily causes a foreshortening of the features below the nose, which takes from the likeness accordingly ; so that, upon the whole, yours has the advantage, especially under the circumstance of your never having seen the original. Mrs. Wordsworth has been looking over your letters in vain to find the address of the person in London, through whose hands any parcel for you might be sent. Pray take the trouble of repeating the address in your next letter, and your request shall be attended to of sending you my two letters upon the offensive subject of a Railway to and through our beautiful neighbourhood.

You will be sorry to hear that Mrs. Wordsworth and I have been, and still are, under great trouble and anxiety. Our daughter-in-law fell into bad health between three and four years ago. She went with her husband to Madeira, where they remained nearly a year ; she was then advised to go to Italy. After a

* *Memoirs*, ii. 152-3.

prolonged residence there, her six children, whom her husband returned to England for, went, at her earnest request, to that country, under their father's guidance : there he was obliged, on account of his duty as a clergyman, to leave them. Four of the number resided with their mother at Rome, three of whom took a fever there, of which the youngest, as noble a boy, of nearly five years, as ever was seen, died, being seized with convulsions when the fever was somewhat subdued. The father, in a distracted state of mind, is just gone back to Italy ; and we are most anxious to hear the result. My only surviving brother, also, the late Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, and an inestimable person, is in an alarming state of health ; and the only child of my eldest brother, long since deceased, is now languishing under mortal illness at Ambleside. He was educated to the medical profession, and caught his illness while on duty in the Mediterranean. He is a truly amiable and excellent young man, and will be universally regretted. These sad occurrences, with others of like kind, have thrown my mind into a state of feeling, which the other day vented itself in the two sonnets which Mrs. Wordsworth will transcribe as the best acknowledgment she can make for Mrs. Reed's and your kindness.

Ever faithfully and affectionately yours,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

146. *Bishop White : Mormonites, &c.*

LETTER TO PROFESSOR REED.

February 3. 1846.

MY DEAR MR. REED,

I was much shocked to find that my last had been despatched without acknowledgment for your kindness in sending me the admirable engraving of Bishop White, which I was delighted, on many accounts, to receive. This omission was owing to the distressed state of mind in which I wrote, and which I throw myself on your goodness to excuse. I ought to have written again by next post, but we really have been, and still are, in such trouble from various causes, that I could not take up the pen, and now must beg you to accept this statement as the only excuse which I can offer. We have had such ac-

* *Memoirs*, ii. 422-3.

counts from my daughter-in-law at Rome, that her mother and brother are just gone thither to support her, her mother being seventy years of age.

Do you know anything of a wretched set of religionists in your country, *Superstitionists* I ought to say, called Mormonites, or latter-day saints ? Would you believe it ? a niece of Mrs. Wordsworth's has just embarked, we believe at Liverpool, with a set of the deluded followers of that wretch, in an attempt to join their society. Her name is ——, a young woman of good abilities and well educated, but early in life she took from her mother and her connections a methodistical turn, and has gone on in a course of what she supposes to be piety till she has come to this miserable close. If you should by chance hear anything about her, pray let us know.

The report of my brother's decease, which we look for every day, has not yet reached us. My nephew is still lingering on from day to day.

Ever faithfully and affectionately yours,
WM. WORDSWORTH.

The print of Bishop White is noble, everything, indeed, that could be wished.*

147. *Governor Malartie : Lord Rector of Glasgow
University, &c.*

LETTER TO SIR W. GOMM, &c. &c., PORT LOUIS, MAURITIUS.

Rydal Mount, Ambleside, Nov. 23. 1846.

DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

Your kind letter of the 4th of August I have just received ; and I thank you sincerely for this mark of your attention, and for the gratification it afforded me. It is pleasing to see fancy amusements giving birth to works of solid profit, as, under the auspices of Lady Gomm, they are doing in your island.

Your sonnet addressed to the unfinished monument of Governor Malartie is conceived with appropriate feeling and just discrimination. Long may the finished monument last as a tribute to departed worth, and as a check and restraint upon in-

* *Memoirs*, ii. 424-5.

temperate desires for change, to which the inhabitants of the island may hereafter be liable !

Before this letter reaches you the newspapers will probably have told you that I have been recently put in nomination, unknown to myself, for the high office of Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow ; and that there was a majority of twenty-one votes in my favour, in opposition to the premier, Lord John Russell. The forms of the election, however, allowed Lord John Russell to be returned, through the single vote of the sub-rector voting for his superior. To say the truth, I am glad of this result ; being too advanced in life to undertake with comfort any considerable public duty, and it might have seemed ungracious to decline the office.

Men of rank, or of high station, with the exception of the poet Campbell, who was, I believe, educated at this university, have almost invariably been chosen for a rector of this ancient university ; and that another exception was made in my favour by a considerable majority affords a proof that literature, independent of office, does not want due estimation. I should not have dwelt so long upon this subject, had anything personal to myself occurred in which you could have taken interest.

As you do not mention your own health, or that of Lady Gomm, I infer with pleasure that the climate agrees with you both. That this may continue to be so is my earnest and sincere wish, in which Mrs. Wordsworth cordially unites.

Believe me, dear Sir William,

Faithfully yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.*

148. *Death of 'Dora.'*

[Received, July 10. 1847.]

MY DEAR C——,

Last night (I ought to have said a quarter before one this morning), it pleased God to take to Himself the spirit of our beloved daughter, and your truly affectionate cousin. She had latterly much bodily suffering, under which she supported herself by prayer, and gratitude to her heavenly Father, for granting her to the last so many of His blessings.

* *Memoirs*, ii. 432-3.

I need not write more. Your aunt bears up under this affliction as becomes a Christian.

Kindest love to Susan, of whose sympathy we are fully assured.

Your affectionate uncle, and the more so for this affliction,

W.M. WORDSWORTH.*

Pray for us !

149. *Of the Same : Sorrow.*

We bear up under our affliction as well as God enables us to do. But oh ! my dear friend, our loss is immeasurable. God bless you and yours.†

Our sorrow, I feel, is for life ; but God's will be done !‡

150.

TO JOHN PEACE, ESQ.

Brigham [Postmark, 'Cockermouth,
Nov. 18. 1848'].

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Mrs. Wordsworth has deputed to me the acceptable office of answering your friendly letter, which has followed us to Brigham, upon the banks of the river Derwent, near Cockermouth, the birthplace of four brothers and their sister. Of these four, I, the second, am now the only one left. Am I wrong in supposing that you have been here ? The house was driven out of its place by a railway, and stands now nothing like so advantageously for a prospect of this beautiful country, though at only a small distance from its former situation.

We are expecting Mr. Cuthbert Southey to-day, from his curacy, seven or eight miles distant. He is busy in carrying through the press the first volume of his father's letters, or rather, collecting and preparing them for it. Do you happen to have any in your possession ? If so, be so kind as to let me or his son know what they are, if you think they contain anything which would interest the public.

Mrs. W. and I are, thank God, both in good health, and possessing a degree of strength beyond what is usual at our age, being both in our seventy-ninth year. The beloved daughter

* *Memoirs*, ii. 434. † To Mr. Moxon, Aug. 9, 1847. ‡ 29th Dec. 1847.

whom it has pleased God to remove from this anxious and sorrowful world, I have not mentioned ; but I can judge of the depth of your fellow-feeling for us. Many thanks to you for referring to the text in Scripture which I quoted to you so long ago.* ‘ Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done.’ He who does not find support and consolation there, will find it nowhere. God grant that it may be continued to me and mine, and to all sufferers ! Believe me, with Mrs. W.’s very kind remembrance,

Faithfully yours,

WM. WORDSWORTH.

When you see Mr. Cottle, pray remember us most affectionately to him, with respectful regards to his sister.†

151. *Illness and Death of a Servant at Rydal Mount.*

Our anxieties are over, and our sorrow is not without heartfelt, I may say heavenly, consolation. Dear, and good, and faithful, and dutiful Jane breathed her last about twelve o’clock last night. The doctor had seen her at noon ; he found her much weaker. She said to him, ‘ I cannot stand now,’ but he gave us no reason to believe her end was so very near. You shall hear all particulars when we are permitted to meet, which God grant may be soon. Nothing could be more gentle than her departure.

Yesterday Mary read to her in my presence some chapters from the New Testament, and her faculties were as clear as any one’s in perfect health, and so they have ever been to the last.‡

152. *Humility.*

Writing to a friend, he says : ‘ I feel myself in so many respects unworthy of your love, and too likely to become more so.’ (This was in 1844.) ‘ Worldly-minded I am not ; on the contrary, my wish to benefit those within my humble sphere strengthens seemingly in exact proportion to my inability to realise those wishes. What I lament most is, that the spirituality of my nature does not expand and rise the nearer I ap-

* [Note by Mr. Peace.] At Rydal Mount in 1838. Ephesians v. 20. ‘ My favourite text,’ said he.

† *Memoirs*, ii. 435-6.

‡ *Ibid.* ii. 501-2.

proach the grave, as yours does, and as it fares with my beloved partner. The pleasure which I derive from God's works in His visible creation is not with me, I think, impaired, but reading does not interest me as it used to do, and I feel that I am becoming daily a less instructive companion to others. Excuse this egotism. I feel it necessary to your understanding what I am, and how little you would gain by habitual intercourse with me, however greatly I might benefit from intercourse with you.'*

153. *Hopefulness.*

Writing to a friend at a time of public excitement, he thus speaks : ' After all (as an excellent Bishop of the Scotch Church said to a friendly correspondent of mine), " Be of good heart ; the affairs of the world will be conducted as heretofore,—by the foolishness of man and the wisdom of God." '†

* *Memoirs*, ii. 502-3.

† *Ibid.* ii. 503.

III. CONVERSATIONS AND PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF WORDSWORTH.

- (a) FROM 'SATYRANE'S LETTERS:' KLOPSTOCK.
- (b) PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF THE HON. MR. JUSTICE COLERIDGE.
- (c) RECOLLECTIONS OF A TOUR IN ITALY, BY H. C. ROBINSON.
- (d) REMINISCENCES OF LADY RICHARDSON AND MRS. DAVY.
- (e) CONVERSATIONS AND REMINISCENCES RECORDED BY THE BISHOP OF LIN-COLN.
- (f) REMINISCENCES OF REV. R. P. GRAVES, M.A., DUBLIN.
- (g) ON DEATH OF COLERIDGE.
- (h) FURTHER REMINISCENCES AND MEMORABILIA, BY REV. R. P. GRAVES, M.A., DUBLIN, NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.
- (i) AN AMERICAN'S REMINISCENCES.
- (j) RECOLLECTIONS OF AUBREY DE VERE, ESQ., NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.
- (k) FROM 'RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LAST DAYS OF SHELLEY AND BYRON,' BY E. J. TRELAWNY, ESQ.
- (l) FROM LETTERS OF PROFESSOR TAYLER (1872).
- (m) ANECDOTE OF CRABBE, FROM DIARY OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.
- (n) WORDSWORTH'S LATER OPINION OF LORD BROUGHAM.

NOTE.

On these 'Personal Reminiscences' see the Preface in Vol. I. G.

(a) KLOPSTOCK : NOTES OF HIS CONVERSATION.

From 'Satyrane's Letters' (*Biographia Literaria*, vol. ii. pp. 228-254,
ed. 1847).

Ratzeburg.

No little fish thrown back again into the water, no fly unimprisoned from a child's hand, could more buoyantly enjoy its element, than I this clean and peaceful house, with this lovely view of the town, groves, and lake of Ratzeburg, from the window at which I am writing. My spirits certainly, and my health I fancied, were beginning to sink under the noise, dirt, and unwholesome air of our Hamburg hotel. I left it on Sunday, Sept. 23rd. with a letter of introduction from the poet Klopstock, to the *Amtmann* of Ratzeburg. The *Amtmann* received me with kindness, and introduced me to the worthy pastor, who agreed to board and lodge me for any length of time not less than a month. The vehicle, in which I took my place, was considerably larger than an English stage-coach, to which it bore much the same proportion and rude resemblance, that an elephant's ear does to the human. Its top was composed of naked boards of different colours, and seeming to have been parts of different wainscots. Instead of windows there were leathern curtains with a little eye of glass in each: they perfectly answered the purpose of keeping out the prospect and letting in the cold. I could observe little, therefore, but the inns and farm-houses at which we stopped. They were all alike, except in size: one great room, like a barn, with a hay-loft over it, the straw and hay dangling in tufts through the boards which formed the ceiling of the room, and the floor of the loft. From this room, which is paved like a street, sometimes one, sometimes two smaller ones, are enclosed at one end. These are commonly floored. In the large room the cattle, pigs, poultry, men, women, and children, live in amicable community: yet there was an appearance of cleanliness and rustic comfort. One of these houses I measured. It was an hundred feet in length. The apartments were taken off from one corner. Between these and

the stalls there was a small interspace, and here the breadth was forty-eight feet, but thirty-two where the stalls were ; of course, the stalls were on each side eight feet in depth. The faces of the cows, &c. were turned towards the room ; indeed they were in it, so that they had at least the comfort of seeing each other's faces. Stall-feeding is universal in this part of Germany, a practice concerning which the agriculturist and the poet are likely to entertain opposite opinions—or at least, to have very different feelings. The wood-work of these buildings on the outside is left unplastered, as in old houses among us, and, being painted red and green, it cuts and tesselates the buildings very gaily. From within three miles of Hamburg almost to Molln, which is thirty miles from it, the country, as far as I could see it, was a dead flat, only varied by woods. At Molln it became more beautiful. I observed a small lake nearly surrounded with groves, and a palace in view belonging to the King of Great Britain, and inhabited by the Inspector of the Forests. We were nearly the same time in travelling the thirty-five miles from Hamburg to Ratzeburg, as we had been in going from London to Yarmouth, one hundred and twenty-six miles.

The lake of Ratzeburg runs from south to north, about nine miles in length, and varying in breadth from three miles to half a mile. About a mile from the southernmost point it is divided into two, of course very unequal, parts by an island, which, being connected by a bridge and a narrow slip of land with the one shore, and by another bridge of immense length with the other shore, forms a complete isthmus. On this island the town of Ratzeburg is built. The pastor's house or vicarage, together with the *Amtmann's*, *Amtsschreiber's*, and the church, stands near the summit of a hill, which slopes down to the slip of land and the little bridge, from which, through a superb military gate, you step into the island-town of Ratzeburg. This again is itself a little hill, by ascending and descending which, you arrive at the long bridge, and so to the other shore. The water to the south of the town is called the Little Lake, which however almost engrosses the beauties of the whole : the shores being just often enough green and bare to give the proper effect to the magnificent groves which occupy the greater part of their circumference. From the turnings, windings, and indentations of the shore, the views vary almost every ten steps, and the whole has a sort of

majestic beauty, a feminine grandeur. At the north of the Great Lake, and peeping over it, I see the seven church towers of Lubec, at the distance of twelve or thirteen miles, yet as distinctly as if they were not three. The only defect in the view is, that Ratzeburg is built entirely of red bricks, and all the houses roofed with red tiles. To the eye, therefore, it presents a clump of brick-dust red. Yet this evening, Oct. 10th. twenty minutes past five, I saw the town perfectly beautiful, and the whole softened down into *complete keeping*, if I may borrow a term from the painters. The sky over Ratzeburg and all the east was a pure evening blue, while over the west it was covered with light sandy clouds. Hence a deep red light spread over the whole prospect, in undisturbed harmony with the red town, the brown-red woods, and the yellow-red reeds on the skirts of the lake. Two or three boats, with single persons paddling them, floated up and down in the rich light, which not only was itself in harmony with all, but brought all into harmony.

I should have told you that I went back to Hamburg on Thursday (Sept. 27th.) to take leave of my friend, who travels southward, and returned hither on the Monday following. From Empfelde, a village half way from Ratzeburg, I walked to Hamburg through deep sandy roads and a dreary flat : the soil everywhere white, hungry, and excessively pulverised ; but the approach to the city is pleasing. Light cool country houses, which you can look through and see the gardens behind them, with arbours and trellis work, and thick vegetable walls, and trees in cloisters and piazzas, each house with neat rails before it, and green seats within the rails. Every object, whether the growth of Nature or the work of man, was neat and artificial. It pleased me far better, than if the houses and gardens, and pleasure fields, had been in a nobler taste : for this nobler taste would have been mere apery. The busy, anxious, money-loving merchant of Hamburg could only have adopted, he could not have enjoyed the simplicity of Nature. The mind begins to love Nature by imitating human conveniences in Nature ; but this is a step in intellect, though a low one—and were it not so, yet all around me spoke of innocent enjoyment and sensitive comforts, and I entered with unscrupulous sympathy into the enjoyments and comforts even of the busy, anxious, money-loving merchants of Hamburg. In this charitable and *catholic* mood I reached the

vast ramparts of the city. These are huge green cushions, one rising above the other, with trees growing in the interspaces, pledges and symbols of a long peace. Of my return I have nothing worth communicating, except that I took extra post, which answers to posting in England. These north German post chaises are uncovered wicker carts. An English dust-cart is a piece of finery, a *chef d'œuvre* of mechanism, compared with them : and the horses !—a savage might use their ribs instead of his fingers for a numeration table. Wherever we stopped, the postilion fed his cattle with the brown rye bread of which he eat himself, all breakfasting together ; only the horses had no gin to their water, and the postilion no water to his gin. Now and henceforward for subjects of more interest to you, and to the objects in search of which I left you : namely, the *literati* and literature of Germany.

Believe me, I walked with an impression of awe on my spirits, as W—— and myself accompanied Mr. Klopstock to the house of his brother, the poet, which stands about a quarter of a mile from the city gate. It is one of a row of little common-place summer-houses, (for so they looked,) with four or five rows of young meagre elm trees before the windows, beyond which is a green, and then a dead flat intersected with several roads. Whatever beauty, (thought I,) may be before the poet's eyes at present, it must certainly be purely of his own creation. We waited a few minutes in a neat little parlour, ornamented with the figures of two of the Muses and with prints, the subjects of which were from Klopstock's odes.* The poet entered. I was much disappointed in his countenance, and recognised in it no likeness

* ['There is a rhetorical amplitude and brilliancy in the *Messias*,' says Mr. Carlyle, 'which elicits in our critic (Mr. Taylor) an instinct truer than his philosophy is. Neither has the still purer spirit of Klopstock's odes escaped him. Perhaps there is no writing in our language that offers so correct an emblem of him as this analysis.' I remember thinking Taylor's 'clear outline' of the *Messias* the most satisfying account of a poem I ever read : it fills the mind with a vision of pomp and magnificence, which it is pleasanter to contemplate, as it were, from afar, massed together in that general survey, than to examine part by part. Mr. Taylor and Mr. Carlyle agree in exalting that ode of Klopstock's, in which he represents the Muse of Britain and the Muse of Germany running a race. The piece seems to me more rhetorical than strictly poetical ; and if the younger Muse's power of keeping up the race depends on productions of this sort, I would not give a penny for her chance, at least if the contest relates to pure poetry. Klopstock's *Herman* (mentioned afterwards,) consists of three chorus-dramas, as Mr. Taylor calls them : *The Battle of Herman*, *Herman and the Princes*, and *The Death of Herman*. Herman is the Arminius of the Roman historians. S. C.]

to the bust. There was no comprehension in the forehead, no weight over the eye-brows, no expression of peculiarity, moral or intellectual, on the eyes, no massiveness in the general countenance. He is, if anything, rather below the middle size. He wore very large half-boots, which his legs filled, so fearfully were they swollen. However, though neither W—— nor myself could discover any indications of sublimity or enthusiasm in his physiognomy, we were both equally impressed with his liveliness, and his kind and ready courtesy. He talked in French with my friend, and with difficulty spoke a few sentences to me in English. His enunciation was not in the least affected by the entire want of his upper teeth. The conversation began on his part by the expression of his rapture at the surrender of the detachment of French troops under General Humbert. Their proceedings in Ireland with regard to the committee which they had appointed, with the rest of their organizing system, seemed to have given the poet great entertainment. He then declared his sanguine belief in Nelson's victory, and anticipated its confirmation with a keen and triumphant pleasure. His words, tones, looks, implied the most vehement Anti-Gallicanism. The subject changed to literature, and I inquired in Latin concerning the history of German poetry and the elder German poets. To my great astonishment he confessed, that he knew very little on the subject. He had indeed occasionally read one or two of their elder writers, but not so as to enable him to speak of their merits. Professor Ebeling, he said, would probably give me every information of this kind : the subject had not particularly excited his curiosity. He then talked of Milton and Glover, and thought Glover's blank verse superiour to Milton's.* W—— and myself expressed our surprise : and my friend gave his definition and notion of harmonious verse, that it consisted, (the English

* [*Leonidas*, an epic poem, by R. Glover, first appeared in May, 1737 : in the fifth edition, published in 1770, it was corrected and extended from nine books to twelve. Glover was the author of *Boadicea* and *Medea*, tragedies, which had some success on the stage. I believe that *Leonidas* has more merit in the conduct of the design, and in the delineation of character, than as poetry.

'He write an epic poem,' said Thomson, 'who never saw a mountain!' Glover had seen the sun and moon, yet he seems to have looked for their poetical aspects in Homer and Milton, rather than in the sky. 'There is not a single simile in *Leonidas*,' says Lyttleton, 'that is borrowed from any of the ancients, and yet there is hardly any poem that has such a variety of beautiful comparisons.' The similes of Milton come so flat and dry out of Glover's mangle, that they are in-

iambic blank verse above all,) in the apt arrangement of pauses and cadences, and the sweep of whole paragraphs,

—————‘with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,’

and not in the even flow, much less in the prominence or anti-thetic vigour, of single lines, which were indeed injurious to the total effect, except where they were introduced for some specific purpose. Klopstock assented, and said that he meant to confine Glover’s superiority to single lines.* He told us that he had

deed quite *another thing* from what they appear in the poems of that Immortal : *ex. gr.*

Like wintry clouds, which, opening for a time,
Tinge their black folds with gleams of scattered light :—
Is not this Milton’s ‘silver lining’ stretched and mangled ?

The Queen of Night
Gleam’d from the centre of th’ ethereal vault,
And o’er the raven plumes of darkness shed
Her placid light.

This is flattened from the well-known passage in *Comus*.

Soon will savage Mars
Deform the lovely *ringlets of thy shrubs*.

A genteel improvement upon Milton’s ‘bush with frizzled hair implicit.’ Then we have

spoiled from delicious to the sight
 Soft dales meand’ring show their flowery laps
 Among rude piles of nature,
 the flowery lap
 Of some irriguous valley spread its store.

Thus does this poet shatter and dissolve the blooming sprays of another man’s plantation, instead of pushing through them some new shoots of his own to crown them with fresh blossoms.

Milton himself borrowed as much as Glover. Aye, ten times more ; yet every passage in his poetry is Miltonic,—more than anything else. On the other hand, his imitators *Miltonize*, yet produce nothing worthy of Milton, the important characteristic of whose writings my father well expressed, when he said ‘The reader of Milton must be always on his duty : *he is surrounded with sense.*’ A man must have his sense to imitate him worthily. How we look through his words at the Deluge, as he floods it upon us in Book xi. l. 738-53 !—The Attic bees produce honey so flavoured with the thyme of Hymettus that it is scarcely eatable, though to smell the herb itself in a breezy walk upon that celebrated Mount would be an exceeding pleasure ; thus certain epic poems are overpoweringly flavoured with herbs of Milton, while yet the fragrant balm and fresh breeze of his poetry is not to be found in them. S. C.]

* [The ‘abrupt and laconic structure’ of Glover’s periods appears at the very commencement of *Leonidas*, which has something military in its movement, but rather the stiff gait of the drilled soldier than the proud march of the martial hero.

The virtuous Spartan who resign’d his life
To save his country at th’ Oetaen straits,

read Milton, in a prose translation, when he was fourteen.* I understood him thus myself, and W—— interpreted Klopstock's French as I had already construed it. He appeared to know very little of Milton or indeed of our poets in general. He spoke with great indignation of the English prose translation of his *MESSIAH*. All the translations had been bad, very bad—but the English was *no* translation—there were pages on pages not in the original: and half the original was not to be found in the translation. W—— told him that I intended to translate a few of his odes as specimens of German lyrics—he then said to me in English, ‘I wish you would render into English some select passages of *THE MESSIAH*, and *revenge* me of your countryman !’

Thermopylae, when all the peopled east
In arms with Xerxes filled the Grecian plains,
O Muse record ! The Hellespont they passed
O'erpowering Thrace. The dreadful tidings swift
To Corinth flew. Her Isthmus was the seat
Of Grecian council. Orpheus thence returns
To Lacedaemon. In assembly full, &c.

Glover's best passages are of a soft character. This is a pleasing *Homerism*:

Lycis dies,

For boist'rous war ill-chosen. He was skill'd
To tune the lulling flute, and melt the heart ;
Or with his pipe's awak'ning strains allure
The lovely dames of Lydia to the dance.
They on the verdant level graceful mov'd
In vary'd measures ; while the cooling breeze
Beneath their swelling garments wanton'd o'er
Their snowy breasts, and smooth Cayster's streams
Soft-gliding murmur'd by. The hostile blade, &c. Bk. VIII.

And here is a pleasing expansion of Pindar, Olymp. II. 109:

Placid were his days,
Which flow'd through blessings. As a river pure,
Whose sides are flowery, and whose meadows fair,
Meets in his course a subterranean void ;
There dips his silver head, again to rise,
And, rising, glide through flow'rs and meadows new ;
So shall Oileus in those happier fields,
Where never tempests roar, nor humid clouds
In mists dissolve, nor white descending flakes
Of winter violate th' eternal green ;
Where never gloom of trouble shades the mind,
Nor gust of passion heaves the quiet breast,
Nor dews of grief are sprinkled. Bk. X. S. C.]

* This was accidentally confirmed to me by an old German gentleman at Helmstadt, who had been Klopstock's school and bed-fellow. Among other boyish anecdotes, he related that the young poet set a particular value on a translation of the *PARADISE LOST*, and always slept with it under his pillow.

It was the liveliest thing which he produced in the whole conversation. He told us, that his first ode was fifty years older than his last. I looked at him with much emotion—I considered him as the venerable father of German poetry; as a good man; as a Christian; seventy-four years old; with legs enormously swollen; yet active, lively, cheerful, and kind, and communicative. My eyes felt as if a tear were swelling into them. In the portrait of Lessing there was a toupee periwig, which enormously injured the effect of his physiognomy—Klopstock wore the same, powdered and frizzled. By the bye, old men ought never to wear powder—the contrast between a large snow-white wig and the colour of an old man's skin is disgusting, and wrinkles in such a neighbourhood appear only channels for dirt. It is an honour to poets and great men, that you think of them as parts of Nature; and anything of trick and fashion wounds you in them, as much as when you see venerable yews clipped into miserable peacocks.—The author of *THE MESSIAH* should have worn his own grey hair.—His powder and periwig were to the eye what *Mr. Virgil* would be to the ear.

Klopstock dwelt much on the superior power which the German language possessed of concentrating meaning. He said, he had often translated parts of Homer and Virgil, line by line, and a German line proved always sufficient for a Greek or Latin one. In English you cannot do this. I answered, that in English we could commonly render one Greek heroic line in a line and a half of our common heroic metre, and I conjectured that this line and a half would be found to contain no more syllables than one German or Greek hexameter. He did not understand me: * and I, who wished to hear his opinions, not to correct them, was glad that he did not.

* Klopstock's observation was partly true and partly erroneous. In the literal sense of his words, and, if we confine the comparison to the average of space required for the expression of the same thought in the two languages, it is erroneous. I have translated some German hexameters into English hexameters, and find, that on the average three English lines will express four lines German. The reason is evident: our language abounds in monosyllables and dissyllables. The German, not less than the Greek, is a polysyllable language. But in another point of view the remark was not without foundation. For the German possessing the same unlimited privilege of forming compounds, both with prepositions and with epithets, as the Greek, it can express the richest single Greek word in a single German one, and is thus freed from the necessity of weak or ungraceful paraphrases. I will content myself with one example at present, viz. the use of the prefixed participles *ver*, *zer*, *ent*, and *weg*: thus *reissen* to rend, *verreissen* to

We now took our leave. At the beginning of the French Revolution Klopstock wrote odes of congratulation. He received some honorary presents from the French Republic, (a golden crown I believe,) and, like our Priestley, was invited to a seat in the legislature, which he declined. But when French liberty metamorphosed herself into a fury, he sent back these presents with a *palinodia*, declaring his abhorrence of their proceedings : and since then he has been perhaps more than enough an Anti-Gallican. I mean, that in his just contempt and detestation of the crimes and follies of the Revolutionists, he suffers himself to forget that the revolution itself is a process of the Divine Providence ; and that as the folly of men is the wisdom of God, so are their iniquities instruments of his goodness. From Klopstock's house we walked to the ramparts, discoursing together on the poet and his conversation, till our attention was diverted to the beauty and singularity of the sunset and its effects on the objects around us. There were woods in the distance. A rich sandy light, (nay, of a much deeper colour than sandy,) lay over these woods that blackened in the blaze. Over that part of the woods which lay immediately under the intenser light, a brassy mist floated. The trees on the ramparts, and the people moving to and fro between them, were cut or divided into equal segments of deep shade and brassy light. Had the trees, and the bodies

rend away, *zerreissen* to rend to pieces, *entreissen* to rend off or out of a thing, in the active sense : or *schmelzen* to melt—*ver, zer, ent, schmelzen*—and in like manner through all the verbs neuter and active. If you consider only how much we should feel the loss of the prefix *be*, as in bedropt, besprinkle, besot, especially in our poetical language, and then think that this same mode of composition is carried through all their simple and compound prepositions, and many of their adverbs; and that with most of these the Germans have the same privilege as we have of dividing them from the verb and placing them at the end of the sentence ; you will have no difficulty in comprehending the reality and the cause of this superior power in the German of condensing meaning, in which its great poet exulted. It is impossible to read half a dozen pages of Wieland without perceiving that in this respect the German has no rival but the Greek. And yet I feel, that concentration or condensation is not the happiest mode of expressing this excellency, which seems to consist not so much in the less time required for conveying an impression, as in the unity and simultaneousness with which the impression is conveyed. It tends to make their language more picturesque : it *depictures* images better. We have obtained this power in part by our compound verbs derived from the Latin : and the sense of its great effect no doubt induced our Milton both to the use and the abuse of Latin derivatives. But still these prefixed particles, conveying no separate or separable meaning to the mere English reader, cannot possibly act on the mind with the force or liveliness of an original and homogeneous language such as the German is, and besides are confined to certain words.

of the men and women, been divided into equal segments by a rule or pair of compasses, the portions could not have been more regular. All else was obscure. It was a fairy scene!—and to increase its romantic character, among the moving objects, thus divided into alternate shade and brightness, was a beautiful child, dressed with the elegant simplicity of an English child, riding on a stately goat, the saddle, bridle, and other accoutrements of which were in a high degree costly and splendid. Before I quit the subject of Hamburg, let me say, that I remained a day or two longer than I otherwise should have done, in order to be present at the feast of St. Michael, the patron saint of Hamburg, expecting to see the civic pomp of this commercial Republic. I was however disappointed. There were no processions, two or three sermons were preached to two or three old women in two or three churches, and St. Michael and his patronage wished elsewhere by the higher classes, all places of entertainment, theatre, &c. being shut up on this day. In Hamburg, there seems to be no religion at all; in Lubec it is confined to the women. The men seem determined to be divorced from their wives in the other world, if they cannot in this. You will not easily conceive a more singular sight, than is presented by the vast aisle of the principal church at Lubec seen from the organ-loft: for, being filled with female servants and persons in the same class of life, and all their caps having gold and silver cauls, it appears like a rich pavement of gold and silver.

I will conclude this letter with the mere transcription of notes, which my friend W—— made of his conversations with Klopstock, during the interviews that took place after my departure. On these I shall make but one remark at present, and that will appear a presumptuous one, namely, that Klopstock's remarks on the venerable sage of Königsburg are to my own knowledge injurious and mistaken; and so far is it from being true, that his system is now given up, that throughout the Universities of Germany there is not a single professor who is not either a Kantean or a disciple of Fichte, whose system is built on the Kantean, and presupposes its truth; or lastly who, though an antagonist of Kant, as to his theoretical work, has not embraced wholly or in part his moral system, and adopted part of his nomenclature. ‘Klopstock having wished to see the

CALVARY of Cumberland, and asked what was thought of it in England, I went to Remnant's (the English bookseller) where I procured the Analytical Review, in which is contained the review of Cumberland's CALVARY. I remembered to have read there some specimens of a blank verse translation of THE MESSIAH. I had mentioned this to Klopstock, and he had a great desire to see them. I walked over to his house and put the book into his hands. On advertizing to his own poem, he told me he began THE MESSIAH when he was seventeen : he devoted three entire years to the plan without composing a single line. He was greatly at a loss in what manner to execute his work. There were no successful specimens of versification in the German language before this time. The first three cantos he wrote in a species of measured or numerous prose. This, though done with much labour and some success, was far from satisfying him. He had composed hexameters both Latin and Greek as a school exercise, and there had been also in the German language attempts in that style of versification. These were only of very moderate merit.—One day he was struck with the idea of what could be done in this way—he kept his room a whole day, even went without his dinner, and found that in the evening he had written twenty-three hexameters, versifying a part of what he had before written in prose. From that time, pleased with his efforts, he composed no more in prose. To-day he informed me that he had finished his plan before he read Milton. He was enchanted to see an author who before him had trod the same path. This is a contradiction of what he said before. He did not wish to speak of his poem to any one till it was finished : but some of his friends who had seen what he had finished, tormented him till he had consented to publish a few books in a journal. He was then, I believe, very young, about twenty-five. The rest was printed at different periods, four books at a time. The reception given to the first specimens was highly flattering. He was nearly thirty years in finishing the whole poem, but of these thirty years not more than two were employed in the composition. He only composed in favourable moments ; besides he had other occupations. He values himself upon the plan of his odes, and accuses the modern lyrical writers of gross deficiency in this respect. I laid the same accusation against Horace : he would not hear of it—but waived the discussion. He called

Rousseau's ODE TO FORTUNE a moral dissertation in stanzas.* I spoke of Dryden's ST. CECILIA; but he did not seem familiar with our writers. He wished to know the distinctions between our dramatic and epic blank verse. He recommended me to read his HERMANN before I read either THE MESSIAH or the

* [A la Fortune. Liv. II. Ode vi. Œuvres de Jean Baptiste Rousseau, p. 121, edit. 1820. One of the latter strophes of this ode concludes with two lines, which, as the editor observes, have become a proverb, and of which the thought and expression are borrowed from Lucretius: *eripitur persona, manet res*: III. v. 58.

Montrez nous, guerriers magnanimes,
Votre vertu dans tout son jour :
Voyons comment vos cœurs sublimes
Du sort soutiendront le retour.
Tant que sa faveur vous seconde,
Vous êtes les maîtres du monde,
Votre gloire nous éblouit :
Mais au moindre revers funeste,
Le masque tombe, l'homme reste,
Et le héros s'évanouit.

Horace, says the Éditeur, en traitant ce même sujet, liv. x. ode xxxv. et Pindare en l'esquissant à grands traits, au commencement de sa douzième Olympique, n'avoient laissé à leurs successeurs que son côté moral à envisager, et c'est le parti que prit Rousseau. The general sentiment of the ode is handled with great dignity in Paradise Regained. Bk. III. l. 43—157—a passage which, as Thyer says, contains the quintessence of the subject. Dante has some noble lines on Fortune in the viith canto of the *Inferno*,—lines worthy of a great mystic poet. After referring to the vain complaints and maledictions of men against this Power, he beautifully concludes :

Ma ella s'è beata e ciò non ode :
Con l'altra prime creature lieta
Volve sua spera, e beata si gode.

J. B. Rousseau was born in 1669, began his career at the close of the age of Louis Quatorze, died at Brussels, March 17, 1741. He had been banished from France, by an intrigue, on a false charge, as now seems clear, of having composed and distributed defamatory verses, in 1712; and it was engraved upon his tomb that he was 'thirty years an object of envy and thirty of compassion.' Belonging to the classical school of the 17th century, of which he was the last survivor, he came somewhat into conflict with the spirit of the 18th, which was preparing a new vintage, and would have none but new wine in new bottles. Rousseau, however, was a very finished writer in his way, and has been compared to Pindar, Horace, Anacreon and Malherbe. His ode to *M. le Comte du Luc* is as fine an example as I know of the modern classical style. This is quite different from that which is exemplified in Wordsworth's Laodamia and Serjeant Talfourd's Ion; for in them the subjects only are ancient, while both the form and spirit are modern; whereas in the odes of Rousseau a modern subject is treated, as far as difference of times and language will allow, in the manner and tone of the Ancients. Samson Agonistes and Goethe's Iphigenia in Tauris are conformed to ancient modes of thought, but in them the subject also is taken from antiquity. Rousseau's works consist of Odes, Epistles in verse, Cantatas, Epigrams, &c. &c. He wrote for the stage at the beginning of his literary life, but with no great success. S. C.]

odes. He flattered himself that some time or other his dramatic poems would be known in England. He had not heard of Cowper. He thought that Voss in his translation of THE ILIAD had done violence to the idiom of the Germans, and had sacrificed it to the Greeks, not remembering sufficiently that each language has its particular spirit and genius.* He said Lessing was the first of their dramatic writers. I complained of NATHAN as tedious. He said there was not enough of action in it; but that Lessing was the most chaste of their writers. He spoke favourably of Goethe; but said that his SORROWS OF WERTER was his best work, better than any of his dramas: he preferred the first written to the rest of Goethe's dramas. Schiller's ROBBERS he found so extravagant, that he could not read it. I spoke of the scene of the setting sun.† He did not know it. He said Schiller could not live. He thought DON CARLOS the best of his dramas; but said that the plot was inextricable.—It was evident he knew little of Schiller's works: indeed, he said, he could not read them. Bürger, he said, was a true poet, and would live; that Schiller, on the contrary, must soon be forgotten; that he gave himself up to the imitation of Shakespeare, who often was extravagant, but that Schiller was ten thousand times more so.‡ He spoke very slightly of Kotzebue, as an

* [Voss, who lived from Feb. 20, 1751, to March, 1826, was author of the Luise, 'a rural epopæa of simple structure divided into three idyls, which relate the betrothment and marriage of the heroine.' This is a pleasing and very peculiar poem, composed in hexameter verse. 'The charm of the narrative,' says Mr. T., 'consists in the minute description of the local domestic manners of the personages.' The charm consists, I think, in the blending of these manners with the beauty of Nature, and the ease and suitability of the versification. Voss's translation of the Odyssey is praised for being so perfect an imitation of the original. The Greek has been rendered, 'with a fidelity and imitative harmony so admirable, that it suggests to the scholar the original wording, and reflects, as from a mirror, every beauty and every blemish of the ancient poem.' Hist. Survey, pp. 61-68. S. C.]

† [Act III. Sc. 2. The night scene, which is the 5th of Act iv. is fine too in a frantic way. The songs it contains are very spirited. That sung by the Robbers is worthy of a Thug; it goes beyond our notions of any European bandit, and transports us to the land of Jaggernat. S. C.]

‡ [The works of Bürger, who was born on the first day of 1748, died June 8, 1794, consist of Poems (2 vols.), Macbeth altered from Shakespeare, (pronounced by Taylor,—no good judge of Shakespeare,—in some respects superior to the original,) Munchaüsen's Travels; Translations; (of the six first books of the Iliad, and some others); Papers philological and political. His fame rests chiefly on three ballads, The Wild Hunter, The Parson's Daughter, and Lenore. The powerful diction and admirable harmony,—rhythm, sound, rhyme of these compositions Mr. Taylor describes as the result of laborious art; it strikes me, from

immoral author in the first place, and next, as deficient in power. At Vienna, said he, they are transported with him ; but we do not reckon the people of Vienna either the wisest or the wittiest people of Germany. He said Wieland was a charming author, and a sovereign master of his own language : that in this respect Goethe could not be compared to him, nor indeed could any body else. He said that his fault was to be fertile to exuberance. I told him the OBERON had just been translated into English. He asked me if I was not delighted with the poem. I answered, that I thought the story began to flag about the seventh or eighth book ; and observed, that it was unworthy of a man of genius to make the interest of a long poem turn entirely upon animal gratification. He seemed at first disposed to excuse this by saying, that there are different subjects for poetry, and that poets are not willing to be restricted in their choice. I answered, that I thought the *passion* of love as well suited to the purposes of poetry as any other passion ; but that it was a cheap way of pleasing to fix the attention of the reader through a long poem on the mere *appetite*. Well ! but, said he, you see, that such poems please every body. I answered, that it was the province of a great poet to raise people up to his own level, not to descend to theirs. He agreed, and confessed, that on no account whatsoever would he have written a work like the OBERON. He spoke in raptures of Wieland's style, and pointed out the passage where Retzia is delivered of her child, as exquisitely beautiful.*

the outline which he has given of Bürger's history, that the violent feelings, the life-like expression of which constitutes their power and value, may have been partly the reflex of the poet's own mind. His seems to have been a life of mismanagement from youth till middle age. Like Milton, he lost a beloved second wife by childbed in the first year of marriage : like him, he married a third time, but without his special necessity—blindness and unkind daughters. He wedded a lady who had fallen in love with his poetry, or perhaps his poetical reputation : an union founded, as it appears, in vanity, ended in vexation of spirit : and as Death, which had deprived him of two wives, did not release him from a third, he obtained his freedom, at the end of little more than three years, from a court of justice. Why did Klopstock undervalue, by preference of such a poet, the lofty-minded Schiller—the dearest to England of all German bards ; perhaps because the author of Wallenstein was a philosopher, and had many things in his philosophy which the author of The Messiah could not find in *his* heaven and earth. S. C.]

* [Oberon, Canto viii. stanzas 69-80. The little touch about the new born babe's returning its mother's kiss is very romantic : though put modestly in the form of a query :

—Und scheint nicht jeden Kuss
Sein kleiner mund dem ihren zu entsaugen ?

I said that I did not perceive any very striking passages ; but that I made allowance for the imperfections of a translation. Of the thefts of Wieland, he said, they were so exquisitely managed, that the greatest writers might be proud to steal as he did. He considered the books and fables of old romance writers in the light of the ancient mythology, as a sort of common property, from which a man was free to take whatever he could make a good use of. An Englishman had presented him with the odes of Collins, which he had read with pleasure. He knew little or nothing of Gray, except his ELEGY written in a country CHURCH-YARD. He complained of the fool in LEAR. I observed that he seemed to give a terrible wildness to the distress ; but still he complained. He asked whether it was not allowed, that Pope had written rhymed poetry with more skill than any of our writers—I said I preferred Dryden, because his couplets had greater variety in their movement. He thought my reason a good one ; but asked whether the rhyme of Pope were not more exact. This question I understood as applying to the final terminations, and observed to him that I believed it was the case ; but that I thought it was easy to excuse some inaccuracy in the final sounds, if the general sweep of the verse was superiour. I told him that we were not so exact with regard to the final endings of lines as the French. He did not seem to know that we made no distinction between masculine and feminine (i.e. single or double,) rhymes : at least he put inquiries to me on this subject. He seemed to think, that no language could be so far formed as that it might not be enriched by idioms borrowed from another tongue. I said this was a very dangerous practice ; and added, that I thought Milton had often injured both his prose and verse by taking this liberty too frequently. I recommended to him the prose works of Dryden as models of pure and native English. I was treading upon tender ground, as I have reason to suppose that he has himself liberally indulged in the practice.

The word *entsaugen* (*suck off*) is expressive—it very naturally characterises the kiss of an infant five minutes of age. Wieland had great nursery experience. ‘My sweetest hours,’ says he, in a letter quoted in the Survey, ‘are those in which I see about me, in all their glee of childhood, my whole posse of little half-way things between apes and angels.’

Mr. Sotheby’s translation of the Oberon made the poem popular in this country. The original first appeared in 1780. S. C.]

The same day I dined at Mr. Klopstock's, where I had the pleasure of a third interview with the poet. We talked principally about indifferent things. I asked him what he thought of Kant. He said that his reputation was much on the decline in Germany. That for his own part he was not surprised to find it so, as the works of Kant were to him utterly incomprehensible—that he had often been pestered by the Kanteans; but was rarely in the practice of arguing with them. His custom was to produce the book, open it and point to a passage, and beg they would explain it. This they ordinarily attempted to do by substituting their own ideas. I do not want, I say, an explanation of your own ideas, but of the passage which is before us. In this way I generally bring the dispute to an immediate conclusion. He spoke of Wolfe as the first Metaphysician they had in Germany. Wolfe had followers; but they could hardly be called a sect, and luckily till the appearance of Kant, about fifteen years ago, Germany had not been pestered by any sect of philosophers whatsoever; but that each man had separately pursued his inquiries uncontrolled by the dogmas of a master. Kant had appeared ambitious to be the founder of a sect; that he had succeeded: but that the Germans were now coming to their senses again. That Nicolai and Engel had in different ways contributed to disenchant the nation;* but above all the incomprehensibility of the philosopher and his philosophy. He seemed pleased to hear, that as yet Kant's doctrines had not met with many admirers in England—did not doubt but that we had too much wisdom to be duped by a writer who set at defiance the common sense and common understandings of men. We talked of tragedy. He seemed to rate highly the power of exciting tears—I said that nothing was more easy than to deluge an audience, that it was done every day by the meanest writers.'

I must remind you, my friend, first, that these notes are not intended as specimens of Klopstock's intellectual power, or even '*colloquial prowess*,' to judge of which by an accidental conversation, and this with strangers, and those two foreigners, would be not only unreasonable, but calumnious. Secondly, I attribute little other interest to the remarks than what is derived from the celebrity of the person who made them. Lastly, if you ask me, whether I have read THE MESSIAH, and what I think of it?

* [See note at the end of the letter. S. C.]

I answer—as yet the first four books only : and as to my opinion—(the reasons of which hereafter)—you may guess it from what I could not help muttering to myself, when the good pastor this morning told me, that Klopstock was the German Milton—‘a very *German* Milton indeed ! ! !’—Heaven preserve you, and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

[These *disenchanters* put one in mind of the ratcatchers, who are said and supposed to rid houses of rats, and yet the rats, somehow or other, continue to swarm. The Kantean rats were not aware, I believe, when Klopstock spoke thus, of the extermination that had befallen them : and even to this day those acute animals infest the old house, and steal away the daily bread of the children,—if the old notions of Space and Time, and the old proofs of religious verities by way of the *understanding* and *speculative reason*, must be called such. Whether or no these are their true spiritual sustenance, or the necessary guard and vehicle of it, is perhaps a question.

But who were Nicolai and Engel, and what did they against the famous enchanter ? The former was born in 1733, at Berlin, where he carried on his father’s business of book-selling, pursued literature with marked success, and attained to old age, full of literary honours. By means of three critical journals (the *Literatur-Briefe*, the *Bibliothek der Schönen Wissenschaftern*, and the *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*,) which he conducted with the powerful co-operation of Lessing, and of his intimate friend Mendelssohn, and to which he contributed largely himself, he became very considerable in the German world of letters, and so continued for the space of twenty years. Jördens, in his Lexicon, speaks highly of the effect of Nicolai’s writings in promoting freedom of thought, enlightened views in theology and philosophy, and a sound taste in fine literature—describes him as a brave battler with intolerance, hypocrisy, and confused conceptions in religion ; with empty subtleties, obscurities, and terminologies, that can but issue in vain fantasies, in his controversial writings on the ‘so-named critical philosophy.’ He engaged with the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, on its appearance in 1781, in the *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek* ; first explained his objections to it in the 11th vol. of his *Reisebeschreibung*, (Description of a Journey through Germany and Switzerland in the year 1781,) and afterwards, in his romance entitled The Life and Opinions of Sempronius Gundibert, a German Philosopher, sought to set forth the childish crotchets and abuses imputable to many disciples of this philosophy in their native absurdity. The *ratsbone* alluded to by Klopstock, was doubtless contained in the above-named romance, which the old poet probably esteemed more than Nicolai’s more serious polemics.

Gundibert has had its day, but in a fiction destined to a day of longer duration,—Goethe’s Faust,—the Satirist is himself most effectively satirised. There he is, in that strange yet beautiful temple, pinned to the wall in a ridiculous attitude, to be laughed at as long as the temple itself is visited and admired. This doom came upon him, not so much for his campaign against the Kanteans, as for his *Joys of Werter*,—because he had dared to ridicule a book, which certainly offered no small temptations to the parodist. Indeed he seems to have been engaged in a series of hostilities with Fichte, Lavater, Wieland, Herder, and Goethe.* In the *Walpurgisnacht* of the Faust he thus addresses the goblin dancers :—

Ihr seyd noch immer da ! Nein das ist unerhört !
Verschwindet doch ! Wir haben ja aufgeklärt !

* [See Mr. Hayward’s excellent translation of Faust, of which I have heard a literary German say that it gave a better notion of the original than any other which he had seen.]

‘Fly !
Vanish ! Unheard of impudence ! What, still there ?
In this enlightened age too, when you have been
Proved not to exist?’—Shelley’s Translation.

Do we not see the doughty reviewer before us magisterially waving his hand and commanding the apparitions to vanish?—then with despondent astonishment exclaiming :

Das Teufelspack es fragt nach keiner Regel.
Wir sind so klug und dennoch sput’s in Tegel.

So wise we are ! yet what fantastic fooleries still stream forth from my contemporary’s brains ; how are we still haunted ! The speech of Faust concerning him is mis-translated by Shelley, who understood the humour of the piece, as well as the poetry, but not the particular humours of it. Nothing can be more expressive of a conceited, narrow-minded reviewer. ‘Oh he!—he is absolutely everywhere,—What others dance, he must decide upon. If he can’t chatter about every step, ’tis as good as not made at all. *Nothing provokes him so much as when we go forward.* If you’d turn round and round in a circle, as he does in his old mill, he’d approve of that perhaps ; especially if you’d consult him about it.’

‘A man of such spirited habitudes,’ says Mr. Carlyle, after affirming that Nicolai wrote against Kant’s philosophy without comprehending it, and judged of poetry, as of Brunswick Mum, by its utility, ‘is now by the Germans called a *Philister*. Nicolai earned for himself the painful pre-eminence of being *Erz Philister*, Arch Philistine.’ ‘He, an old enemy of Goethe’s,’ says Mr. Hill, in explanation of the title in which he appears in the *Walpurgisnacht*, ‘had published an account of his phantasmal illusions, pointing them against Fichte’s system of idealism, which he evidently confounded with what Coleridge would have called Subjective Idolism.’

Such was this wondrous *disenchanter* in the eyes of later critics than Klopstock : a man strong enough to maintain a long fight against genius, not wise enough to believe in it and befriend it. How many a controversialist seems a mighty giant to those who are predisposed to his opinions, while, in the eyes of others, he is but a blind floundering Polyphemus, who knows not how to direct his heavy blows ; if not a menacing scarecrow, with a stake in his hand, which he has no power to drive home ! I remember reading a thin volume in which all metaphysicians that had ever left their thoughts behind them were declared utterly in the wrong—all up to, but not including, the valiant author himself. The world had lain in darkness till he appeared, like a new Phœbus, on the scene. This great man despatched Kant’s system—(never having read a syllable of any work of Kant’s)—in a page and a quarter ! and the exploit had its celebraters and admirers. Yet strange to say, the metaphysical world went on just as if nothing had happened !—after the sun was up, it went groping about, as if it had never been enlightened, and actually ever since has continued to talk as if Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, and other metaphysicians understood the nature of the things they wrote about rather *more* than the mass of mankind, instead of *less* ! *Verschwindet doch !* might this author say, as Nicolai said to the spectres of the Brocken and the phantoms of literature,

Verschwindet doch ! *Wir haben ja aufgeklärt.*

Engel opposed Kant in philosophical treatises, one of which is entitled *Zwei Gespräche den Werth der Kritik betreffend*. He too occupied a considerable space in Literature—his works fill twelve volumes, besides a few other pieces. ‘To him,’ says Jördens, ‘the criticism of taste and of art, speculative, practical, and popular philosophy, owe many of their later advances in Germany.’ Jördens pronounces his romance, entitled *Lorenz Stark*, a masterpiece in its way, and says of his plays, that they deserve a place beside the best of Lessing’s. He was the author of a miscellaneous work, entitled *The Philosopher for the World*, and is

praised by Cousin as a meritorious anthropologist. Engel was born September 11, 1741, at Parchim, of which his father was pastor, in Mecklenburg-Schwerin; died June 28, 1802. Neither Nicolai nor Engel is noticed by Cousin among the adversaries of Kant's doctrine: the intelligent adversaries,—who assailed it with skill and knowledge, rather proved its strength than discovered its weakness. *Fortius acri ridiculum*; but this applies only to transient triumphs, where the object of attack, though it furnishes *occasion* for ridicule, affords no just *cause* for it. S. C.]

(b) PERSONAL REMINISCENCES (1836), BY THE HON.
MR. JUSTICE COLERIDGE.

IN the summer of 1836 I went on the Northern Circuit with Baron Parke. We took Bowness and Storrs, in our way from Appleby to Lancaster; and I visited Wordsworth, and my dear friend Arnold from Storrs. It was my fortune to have to try the great Hornby Castle cause, as it was called; this I did at the end of the circuit, returning from Liverpool to Lancaster for the purpose. Arnold was kind enough to lend me his house (Foxhow) for the vacation; and when the circuit ended, my wife and children accompanied me to it, and we remained there six weeks. During that time Mr. and Mrs. Wordsworth were our only neighbours, and we scarcely saw any one besides; but we needed no other addition to the lovely and loveable country in which we were. He was extremely kind, both in telling us where to go, and very often going with us. He was engaged in correcting the press for a new edition of his poems. The London post, I think, went out at 2 p.m., and then, he would say, he was at our service. A walk with him in that country was a real treat: I never met with a man who seemed to know a country and the people so well, or to love them better, nor one who had such exquisite taste for rural scenery: he had evidently cultivated it with great care; he not only admired the beauties, but he could tell you what were the peculiar features in each scene, or what the incidents to which it owed its peculiar charm. He combined, beyond any man with whom I ever met, the unsophisticated poetic delight in the beauties of nature with a somewhat artistic skill in developing the sources and conditions of them. In examining the parts of a landscape he would be minute; and he dealt with shrubs, flower-beds, and lawns with the readiness of a practiced landscape-gardener. His own little grounds afforded a beautiful specimen of his skill in this latter respect;

and it was curious to see how he had imparted the same faculty in some measure to his gardener—James Dixon, I think, was his name. I found them together one morning in the little lawn by the Mount. ‘James and I,’ said he, ‘are in a puzzle here. The grass here has spots which offend the eye; and I told him we must cover them with soap-lees. “That,” he says, “will make the green there darker than the rest.” “Then,” I said, “we must cover the whole.” He objected: “That will not do with reference to the little lawn to which you pass from this.” “Cover that,” I said. To which he replies, “You will have an unpleasant contrast with the foliage surrounding it.”’

Beside this warm feeling and exquisite taste, which made him so delightful a guide, his favourite spots had a human interest engrafted on them,—some tradition, some incident, some connection with his own poetry, or himself, or some dear friend. These he brought out in a striking way. Apart from these, he was well pleased to discourse on poetry or poets; and here appeared to me to be his principal scholarship. He was extremely well read in English poetry; and he would in his walk review a poem or a poet with admirable precision and fairness. He did not intrude his own poetry or himself, but he did not decline to talk about either; and he spoke of both simply, unboastingly, and yet with a manly consciousness of their worth. It was clear he thought he had achieved a high place among poets: it had been the aim of his life, humanly speaking; and he had taken worthy pains to accomplish and prepare himself for the enterprise. He never would sacrifice anything he thought right on reflection, merely to secure present popularity, or avert criticism which he thought unfounded; but he was a severe critic on himself, and would not leave a line or an expression with which he was dissatisfied until he had brought it to what he liked. He thought this due to the gift of poetry and the character of the poet. Carelessness in the finish of composition he seemed to look on almost as an offence. I remember well, that after speaking with love and delight of a very popular volume of poetry, he yet found great fault with the want of correctness and finish. Reciting one of the poems, and pointing out inaccuracies in it, he said, ‘I like the volume so much, that, if I was the author, I think I should never rest till I had nearly rewritten it.’ No doubt he carried this in his own case to ex-

cess, when he corrected so largely, in the decline of life, poems written in early manhood, under a state of feelings and powers which it was impossible to reproduce, and yet which was necessary, generally speaking, for successful alteration. I cannot but agree with many who think that on this account the earlier copies of his poems are more valuable than the later.

1836. September. Wednesday 21.—Wordsworth and I started in my carriage for Lowther, crossed Kirkstone to Paterdale, by Ulleswater, going through the Glenridding Walks,* and calling at Hallsteads. We reached the castle time enough before dinner for him to give me a walk.

After luncheon, on Thursday 22d, we had an open carriage, and proceeded to Haweswater. It is a fine lake, entirely unspoilt by bad taste. On one side the bank rises high and steep, and is well clothed with wood; on the other it is bare and more sloping. Wordsworth conveyed a personal interest in it to me, by telling me that it was the first lake which my uncle† had seen on his coming into this country: he was in company with Wordsworth and his brother John. Wordsworth pointed out to me somewhere about the spot on the hill-side, a little out of the track, from which they first saw the lake; and said, he well remembered how his face brightened, and how much delight he appeared to feel. Yesterday morning we returned to this place. We called on our way and took our luncheon at Hallsteads, and also called at Paterdale Hall. At both it was gratifying to see the cordial manner of W.'s reception: he seemed loved and honoured; and his manner was of easy, hearty, kindness to them.

My tour with him was very agreeable, and I wish I could preserve in my memory more of his conversation than I shall

* I remember well, asking him if we were not trespassing on private pleasure-grounds here. He said, no; the walks had, indeed, been inclosed, but he remembered them open to the public, and he always went through them when he chose. At Lowther, we found among the visitors, the late Lord W——; and describing our walk, he made the same observation, that we had been trespassing; but Wordsworth maintained his point with somewhat more warmth than I either liked, or could well account for. But afterwards, when we were alone, he told me he had purposely answered Lord W—— stoutly and warmly, because he had done a similar thing with regard to some grounds in the neighbourhood of Penrith, and excluded the people of Penrith from walking where they had always enjoyed the right before. He had evidently a pleasure in vindicating these rights, and seemed to think it a duty. J. T. C.

† See *Memoirs*, vol. i. pp. 147-8.

be able to do. I was anxious to get from him anecdotes of himself and my uncle, and of their works. He told me of himself, that his first verses were a Popian copy written at school on the ‘Pleasure of Change;’ then he wrote another on the ‘Second Centenary of the School’s Foundation;’ that he had written these verses on the holidays, and on the return to school; that he was rather the poet of the school. The first verses from which he remembered to have received great pleasure, were Miss Carter’s ‘Poem on Spring,’ a poem in the six-line stanza, which he was particularly fond of, and had composed much in, for example, ‘Ruth.’ He said there was some foundation in fact, however slight, for every poem he had written of a narrative kind; so slight indeed, sometimes, as hardly to deserve the name; for example, ‘The Somnambulist’ was wholly built on the fact of a girl at Lyulph’s Tower being a sleep-walker; and ‘The Water Lily,’ on a ship bearing that name. ‘Michael’ was founded on the son of an old couple having become dissolute and run away from his parents; and on an old shepherd having been seven years in building up a sheepfold in a solitary valley: ‘The Brothers,’ on a young shepherd, in his sleep, having fallen down a crag, his staff remaining suspended midway. Many incidents he seemed to have drawn from the narration of Mrs. Wordsworth, or his sister, ‘Ellen’ for example, in ‘The Excursion;’ and they must have told their stories well, for he said his principle had been to give the oral part as nearly as he could in the very words of the speakers, where he narrated a real story, dropping, of course, all vulgarisms or provincialisms, and borrowing sometimes a Bible turn of expression: these former were mere accidents, not essential to the truth in representing how the human heart and passions worked; and to give these last faithfully was his object. If he was to have any name hereafter, his hope was on this, and he did think he had in some instances succeeded;* that the sale of his poems increased

* You could not walk with him a mile without seeing what a loving interest he took in the play and working of simple natures. As you ascend Kirkstone from Paterdale, you have a bright stream leaping down from rock to rock, on your right, with here and there silent pools. One of Wordsworth’s poor neighbours worked all the week over Kirkstone, I think in some mines; and returning on Saturday evenings, used to fish up this little stream. We met him with a string of small trout. W. offered to buy them, and bid him take them to the Mount. ‘Nay,’ said the man, ‘I cannot sell them, Sir; the little children at home look for them for supper, and I can’t disappoint them.’ It was quite pleasant to see how the man’s answer delighted the Poet. J. T. C.

among the classes below the middle ; and he had had, constantly, statements made to him of the effect produced in reading ‘ Michael’ and other such of his poems. I added my testimony of being unable to read it aloud without interruption from my own feelings. ‘ She was a phantom of delight’ he said was written on ‘ his dear wife,’ of whom he spoke in the sweetest manner ; a manner full of the warmest love and admiration, yet with delicacy and reserve. He very much and repeatedly regretted that my uncle had written so little verse ; he thought him so eminently qualified, by his very nice ear, his great skill in metre, and his wonderful power and happiness of expression. He attributed, in part, his writing so little, to the extreme care and labour which he applied in elaborating his metres. He said, that when he was intent on a new experiment in metre, the time and labour he bestowed were inconceivable ; that he was quite an epicure in sound. Latterly he thought he had so much acquired the habit of analysing his feelings, and making them matter for a theory or argument, that he had rather dimmed his delight in the beauties of nature and injured his poetical powers. He said he had no idea how ‘ Christabelle’ was to have been finished, and he did not think my uncle had ever conceived, in his own mind, any definite plan for it ; that the poem had been composed while they were in habits of daily intercourse, and almost in his presence, and when there was the most unreserved intercourse between them as to all their literary projects and productions, and he had never heard from him any plan for finishing it. Not that he doubted my uncle’s *sincerity* in his subsequent assertions to the contrary ; because, he said, schemes of this sort passed rapidly and vividly through his mind, and so impressed him, that he often fancied he had arranged things, which really and upon trial proved to be mere embryos. I omitted to ask him, what seems obvious enough now, whether, in conversing about it, he had never asked my uncle how it would end. The answer would have settled the question. He regretted that the story had not been made to end the same night in which it begun. There was difficulty and danger in bringing such a personage as the witch to the daylight, and the breakfast-table ; and unless the poem was to have been long enough to give time for creating a second interest, there was a great probability of the conclusion being flat after such a commencement.

A great number of my uncle's sonnets, he said, were written from the 'Cat and Salutation,' or a public-house with some such name, in Smithfield, where my uncle imprisoned himself for some time; and they appeared in a newspaper, I think he said the *Morning Chronicle*.

He remembered his writing a great part of the translation of 'Wallenstein,' and he said there was nothing more astonishing than the ease and rapidity with which it was done.

Sept. 29th, Foxhow.—We are just setting out, in a promising day, for a second trip to Keswick, intending, if possible, to penetrate into Wastdale, over the Sty Head. Before I go, I wish to commemorate a walk with the Poet, on a drizzly muddy day, the turf sponging out water at every step, through which he stalked as regardless as if he were of iron, and with the same fearless, unchanged pace over rough and smooth, slippery and sound. We went up by the old road* from Ambleside to Keswick, and struck off from the table-land on the left, over the fell ground, till he brought me out on a crag, bounded, as it were, by two ascents, and showing me in front, as in a frame, Grasmere Lake, 'the one green island,' the church, village, &c., and the surrounding mountains. It is a lovely scene, strikingly described in his verses beginning,

'When to the attractions of the busy world,
Preferring studious leisure,' &c.†

Oct. 7th.—Yesterday Wordsworth drove me to Low-wovel; and then we ascended a great way towards Kirkstone by Troutbeck, passing by many interesting cots, barns, and farm-houses, where W. had constantly something to point out in the architecture, or the fringes of moss, fern, &c., on the roofs or walls. We crossed the valley, and descended on Troutbeck Church, whence we came down to the turnpike road, and I left the Poet, who was going on to assist Sir T. Pasley in laying out his grounds. I turned homeward, till I met my horse.

* This old road was very steep, after the fashion of former days, crossing the hill straight over its highest point. A new cut had been made, somewhat diminishing the steepness, but still leaving it a very inconvenient and difficult ascent. At length another alteration was made, and the road was carried on a level round the foot of the hill. My friend Arnold pointed these out to me, and, quizzing my politics, said, the first denoted the old Tory corruption, the second bit by bit, the third Radical Reform. J. T. C.

† See Poems on the naming of Places.

As we walked, I was admiring the never-ceasing sound of water, so remarkable in this country. ‘I was walking,’ he said, ‘on the mountains, with —, the Eastern traveller; it was after rain, and the torrents were full. I said, “I hope you like your companions—these bounding, joyous, foaming streams.” “No,” said the traveller, pompously, “I think they are not to be compared in delightful effect with the silent solitude of the Arabian Desert.” My mountain blood was up. I quickly observed that he had boots and a stout great-coat on, and said, “I am sorry you don’t like this; perhaps I can show you what will please you more.” I strode away, and led him from crag to crag, hill to vale, and vale to hill, for about six hours; till I thought I should have had to bring him home, he was so tired.’

October 10th.—I have passed a great many hours to-day with Wordsworth, in his house. I stumbled on him with proof sheets before him. He read me nearly all the sweet stanzas written in his copy of the ‘Castle of Indolence,’* describing himself and my uncle; and he and Mrs. W. both assured me the description of the latter at that time was perfectly accurate; that he was almost as a great boy in feelings, and had all the tricks and fancies there described. Mrs. W. seemed to look back on him, and those times, with the fondest affection. Then he read me some lines, which formed part of a suppressed portion of ‘The Waggoner;’ but which he is now printing ‘on the Rock of Names,’ so called because on it they had carved out their initials :

- W. W. Wm. Wordsworth.
- M. H. Mary W.
- D. W. Dorothy Wordsworth.
- S. T. C. Samuel Taylor Coleridge.
- J. W. John Wordsworth.
- S. H. Sarah Hutchinson.

This rock was about a mile beyond Wythburn Chapel, to which they used to accompany my uncle, in going to Keswick from Grasmere, and where they would meet him when he returned. This led him to read much of ‘The Waggoner’ to me. It seems a very favourite poem of his, and he read me splendid descriptions from it. He said his object in it had not been

* Poems founded on the Affections.

understood. It was a play of the fancy on a domestic incident and lowly character : he wished by the opening descriptive lines to put his reader into the state of mind in which he wished it to be read. If he failed in doing that, he wished him to lay it down. He pointed out, with the same view, the glowing lines on the state of exultation in which Ben and his companions are under the influence of liquor. Then he read the sickening languor of the morning walk, contrasted with the glorious uprising of Nature, and the songs of the birds. Here he has added about six most exquisite lines.

We walked out on the turf terrace, on the Loughrigg side of Rydal Water. Most exquisitely did the lake and opposite bank look. Thence he led me home under Loughrigg, through lovely spots I had never seen before. His conversation was on critical subjects, arising out of his attempts to alter his poems. He said he considered ‘The White Doe’ as, in conception, the highest work he had ever produced. The mere physical action was all unsuccessful ; but the true action of the poem was spiritual—the subduing of the will, and all inferior passions, to the perfect purifying and spiritualising of the intellectual nature ; while the Doe, by connection with Emily, is raised as it were from its mere animal nature into something mysterious and saint-like. He said he should devote much labour to perfecting the execution of it in the mere business parts, in which, from anxiety ‘to get on’ with the more important parts, he was sensible that imperfections had crept in, which gave the style a feebleness of character.

He talked of Milton, and observed how he sometimes indulged himself, in the ‘Paradise Lost,’ in lines which, if not in time, you could hardly call verse, instancing,

‘And Tiresias and Phineus, prophets old ;’

and then noticed the sweet-flowing lines which followed, and with regard to which he had no doubt the unmusical line before had been inserted.

‘Paradise Regained’ he thought the most perfect in *execution* of anything written by Milton ; that and the ‘Merchant of Venice,’ in language, he thought were almost faultless : with the exception of some little straining in some of the speeches about the caskets, he said, they were perfect, the genuine Eng-

lish expressions of the ideas of their own great minds. Thomson he spoke of as a real poet, though it appeared less in his ‘Seasons’ than in his other poems. He had wanted some judicious adviser to correct his taste; but every person he had to deal with only served to injure it. He had, however, a true love and feeling for Nature, and a greater share of poetical imagination, as distinguished from dramatic, than any man between Milton and him. As he stood looking at Ambleside, seen across the valley, embosomed in wood, and separated from us at sufficient distance, he quoted from Thomson’s ‘Hymn on Solitude,’ and suggested the addition, or rather insertion, of a line at the close, where he speaks of glancing at London from Norwood. The line, he said, should have given something of a more favourable impression:

‘Ambition —————* and pleasure vain.’

October 14th, Foxhow.—We have had a delightful day to-day. The weather being fine, Wordsworth agreed to go with us into Easedale; so we got three ponies, for Mary and Madge, and Fred and Alley, alternately, and walked from Grasmere, he *trudging*† before, with his green gauze shade over his eyes, and in his plaid jacket and waistcoat. First, he turned aside at a little farm-house, and took us into a swelling field, to look down on the tumbling stream which bounded it, and which we saw precipitated at a distance, in a broad white sheet, from the mountain. A beautiful water-break of the same stream was before us at our feet, and he noticed the connection which it formed in the landscape with the distant waterfall. Then, as he mused for an instant, he said, ‘I have often thought what a solemn thing it would be, if we could have brought to our mind, at once, all the scenes of distress and misery, which any spot, however beautiful and calm before us, has been witness to since the beginning. That water-break, with the glassy, quiet pool beneath it, that looks so lovely, and presents no images to the mind but of peace,—there, I remember, the only son of his father, a poor man, who lived yonder, was drowned. He missed him, came to search, and saw his body dead in the pool.’ We pursued our way up the stream, not a very easy way for the

* I cannot fill the blank. J. T. C.

† I used the word *trudging* at the time; it denoted to me his bold way of walking. J. T. C.

horses, near to the waterfall before mentioned, and so gradually up to the Tarn. Oh, what a scene ! The day one of the softest and brightest in autumn ; the lights various ; the mountains in the richest colouring, fern covering them with reddish gold in great part ; here and there, trees in every variety of autumn foliage ; and the rock itself of a kind of lilac tint ; the outlines of the mountains very fine ; the Tarn, which might almost be called a lake for size and abundance of water, with no culture, or trees, or habitation around it, here and there a great rock stretching into it like a promontory, and high mountains surrounding it on three sides, on two of them almost precipitate ; on the fourth side, it is more open, and on this the stream, crossed by four great stepping-stones, runs out of it, and descends into Grasmere vale and lake. He pointed out the precipitous mountain at the head of the Tarn, and told us an incident of his sister and himself coming from Langdale, which lies on the other side. He having for some reason parted, she encountered a fog, and was bewildered. At last, she sat down and waited ; in a short time it began to clear ; she could see that a valley was before her. In time, she saw the backs of cattle feeding, which emerged from the darkness, and at last the Tarn ; and then found she had stopped providentially, and was sitting nearly on the edge of the precipice. Our return was somewhat more perilous for the riders than the ascent ; but we accomplished it safely, and, in our return, turned in Butterlip How, a circular, soft, green hill, surrounded with oak trees, at the head of Grasmere. It is about twenty acres, and belongs to a London banker, purchased, as I suppose, with a view to building on it. It is a lovely spot for a house, with delicious views of the lake and church, Easedale, Helm Crag, &c. I have seen no place, I think, on which I should so much like to build my retreat.

October 16th.—Since church, we have taken our last walk with Wordsworth. M. was mounted on Dora W.'s pony. He led us up on Loughrigg, round to the Tarn, by the back of Loughrigg to the foot of Grasmere Lake, and so home by this side of Rydal ; the weather warm and fine, and a lovely walk it was. The views of the mountains, Langdale Way, the Tarn itself and its banks, and the views on Grasmere and Rydal Waters, are almost beyond anything I have seen, even in this country.

He and Mrs. W. came this evening to bid us farewell. We parted with great, I believe mutual, regret; certainly they have been kind to us in a way and degree which seemed unequivocally to testify good liking to us, and them it is impossible not to love. The more I have seen of Wordsworth, the more I admire him as a poet and as a man. He has the finest and most discriminating feeling for the beauties of Nature that I ever witnessed; he expresses himself in glowing and yet manly language about them. There is much simplicity in his character, much *naïveté*, but it is all generous and highly moral.*

(c) RECOLLECTIONS OF TOUR IN ITALY, BY H. C.
ROBINSON.

30 Russell-square, Oct. 18. 1850.

MY DEAR SIR,

I feel quite ashamed, I assure you, of sending you the Itinerary of my journey with Mr. Wordsworth, so poorly accompanied as it must be, and the more, because Mr. Wordsworth seems to have thought that I might be able to make a contribution to your work worth your acceptance. At the same time, I am much relieved by recollecting that he himself cared nothing for the connection which a place might have with a great poet, unless an acquaintance with it served to illustrate his works. He made this remark in the Church of St. Onofrio at Rome, where Tasso lies buried. The place which, on this account, interested him more than any other on the journey was *Vaucluse*, while he cared nothing for Arezzo, which claims to be the place of Petrarch's birth. Indeed, a priest on the spot, on another visit, said it is not certain that he was born there, much less in the house marked with his name. Mr. W. was not without the *esprit de corps*, even before his official dignity, and took great interest in Savona, on account of Chiabrera, as appears in the 'Musings near Aquapendente,' perhaps the most beautiful of these Memorials of the Italian tour—'alas too few!' As he himself repeatedly said of the journey, 'It is too late.' 'I have matter for volumes,' he said once, 'had I but youth to work it up.' It is remarkable how in this admirable poem meditation predominates over observation. It often happened

* *Memoirs*, ii. 300-15.

that objects of universal attraction served chiefly to bring back to his mind absent objects dear to him. When we were on that noble spot, the Amphitheatre at Nismes, I observed his eyes fixed in a direction where there was the least to be seen ; and, looking that way, I beheld two very young children at play with flowers ; and I overheard him say to himself, ‘ Oh ! you darlings, I wish I could put you in my pocket and carry you to Rydal Mount.’

It was Mr. Theed, the sculptor, who informed us of the pine tree being the gift of Sir George Beaumont. This incident occurred within a few minutes after our walking up the Pincian Hill. And this was the very first observation Mr. W. made at Rome.

It was a remark justly made on the Memorials of the Swiss Journey in 1820, that Mr. W. left unnoticed the great objects which have given rise to innumerable common-place verses and huge piles of bad prose, and which every body talks about, while he dwelt on impressions peculiar to himself. As a reproach, nothing can be more idle and unmeaning. I expected it would be so with these latter poems, and so I found it. There are not more than two others which bring anything to my mind.

The most important of these is the ‘Cuckoo at Laverna.’ I recollect perfectly well that I heard the cuckoo at Laverna twice before he heard it ; and that it absolutely fretted him that my ear was first favoured ; and that he exclaimed with delight, ‘ I hear it ! I hear it !’ It was at Laverna, too, that he led me to expect that he had found a subject on which he would write ; and that was the love which birds bore to St. Francis. He repeated to me a short time afterwards a few lines, which I do not recollect among those he has written on St. Francis in this poem. On the journey, one night only I heard him in bed composing verses, and on the following day I offered to be his amanuensis ; but I was not patient enough, I fear, and he did not employ me a second time. He made inquiries for St. Francis’s biography, as if he would dub him his Leib-heiliger (body-saint), as Goethe (saying that every one must have one) declared St. Philip Neri to be his.

The painter monk at Camaldoli also interested him, but he heard my account only in addition to a *very poor* exhibition of professional talent ; but he would not allow the pictures to be

so very poor, as every nun ought to be beautiful when she takes the veil.

I recollect, too, the pleasure he expressed when I said to him, ‘ You are now sitting in Dante’s chair.’ It faces the south transept of the cathedral at Florence.

I have been often asked whether Mr. W. wrote anything on the journey, and my answer has always been, ‘ Little or nothing.’ Seeds were cast into the earth, and they took root slowly. This reminds me that I once was privy to the conception of a sonnet, with a distinctness which did not once occur on the longer Italian journey. This was when I accompanied him into the Isle of Man. We had been drinking tea with Mr. and Mrs. Cookson, and left them when the weather was dull. Very soon after leaving them we passed the church tower of Bala Sala. The upper part of the tower had a sort of frieze of yellow lichens. Mr. W. pointed it out to me, and said, ‘ It’s a perpetual sunshine.’ I thought no more of it, till I read the beautiful sonnet,

‘ Broken in fortune, but in mind entire ;’*

and then I exclaimed, I was present at the conception of this sonnet, at least of the combination of thought out of which it arose.

I beg to subscribe myself, with sincere esteem,

Faithfully yours,

H. C. ROBINSON.†

(d) REMINISCENCES OF WORDSWORTH.

BY LADY RICHARDSON, AND MRS. DAVY, OF THE OAKS, AMBLESIDE.

(I.) LADY RICHARDSON.

Lancrigg, Easedale, August 26. 1841.

WORDSWORTH made some striking remarks on Goethe in a walk on the terrace yesterday. He thinks that the German poet is greatly overrated, both in this country and his own. He said, ‘ He does not seem to me to be a great poet in either of the classes of poets. At the head of the first class I would place Homer and Shakspeare, whose universal minds are able to reach every variety of thought and feeling without bringing their own

* See *Memoirs*, ii. 246.

† *Ibid.* ii. 329-32.

individuality before the reader. They infuse, they breathe life into every object they approach, but you never find *themselves*. At the head of the second class, those whom you can trace individually in all they write, I would place Spenser and Milton. In all that Spenser writes you can trace the gentle affectionate spirit of the man; in all that Milton writes you find the exalted sustained being that he was. Now in what Goethe writes, who aims to be of the first class, the *universal*, you find the man himself, the artificial man, where he should not be found; so that I consider him a very artificial writer, aiming to be universal, and yet constantly exposing his individuality, which his character was not of a kind to dignify. He had not sufficiently clear moral perceptions to make him anything but an artificial writer.'

Tuesday, the 2d of May, Wordsworth and Miss F. came early to walk about and dine. He was in a very happy kindly mood. We took a walk on the terrace, and he went as usual to his favourite points. On our return he was struck with the berries on the holly tree, and said, 'Why should not you and I go and pull some berries from the other side of the tree, which is not seen from the window? and then we can go and plant them in the rocky ground behind the house.' We pulled the berries, and set forth with our tool. I made the holes, and the Poet put in the berries. He was as earnest and eager about it, as if it had been a matter of importance; and as he put the seeds in, he every now and then muttered, in his low solemn tone, that beautiful verse from Burns's 'Vision':

‘ And wear thou this, she solemn said,
And bound the holly round my head.
The polished leaves and berries red
Did rustling play;
And like a passing thought she fled
In light away.’

He clambered to the highest rocks in the ‘Tom Intake,’ and put in the berries in such situations as Nature sometimes does with such true and beautiful effect. He said, ‘I like to do this for posterity. Some people are selfish enough to say, What has posterity done for me? but the past does much for us.’

(II.) ADDITIONAL SENT TO THE PRESENT EDITOR BY LADY RICHARDSON.

August 28th, 1841.—Mr. Wordsworth, Miss Fenwick, and Mrs. Hill came to dine, and it rained on the whole day, but happily the Poet talked on from two to eight without being weary, as we certainly were not. After dinner, when we came to the drawing-room, the conversation turned on the treatment of Wordsworth by the reviews of the day. I had never heard him open out on it before, and was much struck with the manner in which he did it; from his present elevation looking calmly back on the past, and at the same time feeling that an irreparable injury had been done to him at the time when life and hope were young. As nearly as I can I shall record his words as they were spoken. He said :

‘ At the time I resolved to dedicate myself to poetry and separate myself from the ordinary lucrative professions, it would certainly have been a great object to me to have reaped the profits I should have done from my writings but for the stupidity of Mr. Gifford and the impertinence of Mr. Jeffrey. It would have enabled me to purchase many books which I could not obtain, and I should have gone to Italy earlier, which I never could afford to do until I was sixty-five, when Moxon gave me a thousand pounds for my writings. This was the only kind of injury Mr. Jeffrey did me, for I immediately perceived that his mind was of that kind that his individual opinion on poetry was of no consequence to me whatever, that it was only by the influence his periodical exercised at the time in preventing my poems being read and sold that he could injure me; for feeling that my writings were founded on what was true and spiritual in human nature, I knew the time would come when they must be known, and I never therefore felt his opinion of the slightest value, except in preventing the young of that generation from receiving impressions which might have been of use to them through life. I say this, I hope not in a boasting spirit, but I am now daily surprised by receiving letters from various places at home and abroad expressive of gratitude to me from persons I never saw or heard of. As this occurs now, I may fairly conclude that it might have been so when the poems appeared, but for the tyranny exercised over public opinion by the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviews*. ’

December 1841.—Wordsworth and Miss Fenwick spent the shortest day of the year with us; he brought with him his Epitaph on Southey, and as we sat round the fire after dinner, my mother asked him to read it to us, which he did in his usual impressive manner. He asked our impression of it. My mother ventured to tell him of one word, or rather two, which she thought might be altered with advantage. They were these :

‘Wide was his range, but ne’er in human breast
Did private feeling find a holier nest.’

‘Holier nest’ were the words she objected to, as not being a correct union of ideas. He took the suggestion most kindly, and said it had been much discussed in his own mind and in his family circle, but that he saw the force of what she said, and that he was aware many others would see it also. He said there was yet time to change it, and that he should consult Judge Coleridge whether the line, as he once had it,

‘Did private feeling meet in holier rest,’

would not be more appropriate to the simplicity of an epitaph where you con every word, and where every word is expected to bear an exact meaning. We all thought this was an improvement. During tea he talked with great animation of the separation of feeling between the rich and poor in this country; the reason of this he thinks is the greater freedom we enjoy; that the line of demarcation not being so clearly laid down in this country by the law as in others, people fancy they must make it for themselves. He considers Christianity the only cure for this state of things. He spoke of his own desire to carry out the feeling of brotherhood with regard to servants, which he all along endeavoured to do. He doubted whether he might not have had better servants on a different system; but he thought it right to endeavour to inspire your domestics with a feeling of common interest. My mother said she entirely agreed with him, but she had always found it most difficult.

(III.) LADY RICHARDSON (CONTINUED).

November 1843.—Wordsworth holds the critical power very low, infinitely lower than the inventive; and he said to-day that if the quantity of time considered in writing critiques on the works of others were given to original composition, of

whatever kind it might be, it would be much better employed ; it would make a man find out sooner his own level, and it would do infinitely less mischief. A false or malicious criticism may do much injury to the minds of others ; a stupid invention, either in prose or verse, is quite harmless.

December 22d, 1843.—The shortest day is past, and it was a very pleasant one to us, for Wordsworth and Miss Fenwick offered to spend it with us. They came early, and, although it was misty and dingy, he proposed to walk up Easedale. We went by the terrace, and through the little gate on the Fell, round by Brimmer Head, having diverged a little up from Easedale, nearly as far as the ruined cottage. He said, when he and his sister wandered there so much, that cottage was inhabited by a man of the name of Benson, a waller, its last inhabitant. He said on the terrace, ‘ This is a striking anniversary to me ; for this day forty-four years ago, my sister and I took up our abode at Grasmere, and three days after we found out this walk, which long remained our favourite haunt.’ There is always something very touching in his way of speaking of his sister ; the tones of his voice become more gentle and solemn, and he ceases to have that flow of expression which is so remarkable in him on all other subjects. It is as if the sadness connected with her present condition was too much for him to dwell upon in connection with the past, although habit and the ‘ omnipotence of circumstance’ have made its daily presence less oppressive to his spirits. He said that his sister spoke constantly of their early days, but more of the years they spent together in other parts of England than those at Grasmere. As we proceeded on our walk he happened to speak of the frequent unhappiness of married persons, and the low and wretched principles on which the greater number of marriages were formed. He said that unless there was a strong foundation of love and respect, the ‘ unavoidable breaks and cataracts’ of domestic life must soon end in mutual aversion, for that married life ought not to be in theory, and assuredly it never was in practice, a system of mere submission on either side, but it should be a system of mutual coöperation for the good of each. If the wife is always expected to conceal her difference of opinion from her husband, she ceases to be an equal, and the man loses the advantage which the marriage tie is intended to provide for him

in a civilised and Christian country. He then went on to say, that, although he never saw an amiable single woman without wishing that she were married, from his strong feeling of the happiness of a well-assorted marriage, yet he was far from thinking that marriage always improved people. It certainly did not, unless it was a congenial marriage.*

(IV.) MRS. DAVY.

'The Oaks, Ambleside, Monday, Jan. 22. 1844.

While Mrs. Quillinan was sitting with us to-day, Henry Fletcher ran in to say that he had received his summons for Oxford (he had been in suspense about rooms as an exhibitioner at Balliol), and must be off within an hour. His young cousins and I went down with him to wait for the mail in the market-place. We found Mr. Wordsworth walking about before the post-office door in very charming mood. His spirits were excited by the bright morning sunshine, and he entered at once on a full flow of discourse. He looked very benevolently on Henry as he mounted on the top of the coach, and seemed quite disposed to give an old man's blessing to the young man entering on an untried field, and then (nowise interrupted by the hurrying to and fro of ostlers with their smoking horses, or passengers with their carpet bags) he launched into a dissertation, in which there was, I thought, a remarkable union of his powerful diction, and his practical, thoughtful good sense, on the subject of college habits, and of his utter distrust of all attempts to nurse virtue by an avoidance of temptation. He expressed also his entire want of confidence (from experience he said) of highly-wrought religious expression in youth. The safest training for the mind in religion he considered to be a contemplating of the character and personal history of Christ. 'Work it,' he said, 'into your thoughts, into your imagination, make it a real presence in the mind.' I was rejoiced to hear this plain, loving confession of a Christian faith from Wordsworth. I never heard one more earnest, more as if it came out of a devoutly believing heart.

* The close of Lady Richardson's 'Reminiscences' here in the *Memoirs* is not given, as being more fully introduced under December 1841, p. 438. The repetition of the same sentiments in 1843, however, is noticeable. For a vivid and sweetly toned paper on Wordsworth by Lady Richardson—based on the *Memoirs*—see Sharpe's *London Magazine* for March 1853, pp. 148-55. G.

The Oaks, March 5. 1844.

On our way to Lancrigg to-day, we called at Foxhow. We met Mr. Wordsworth there, and asked him to go with us. It was a beautiful day, one of his very own 'mild days' of this month. He kindly consented, and walked with us to meet the carriage at Pelter Bridge. On our drive, he mentioned, with marked pleasure, a dedication written by Mr. Keble, and sent to him for his approval, and for his permission to have it prefixed to Mr. Keble's new volumes of Latin Lectures on Poetry delivered at Oxford. Mr. Wordsworth said that he had never seen any estimate of his poetical powers, or more especially of his aims in poetry, that appeared to him so discriminating and so satisfactory. He considers praise a perilous and a difficult thing. On this subject he often quotes his lamented friend, Sir George Beaumont, whom, in his intercourse with men of genius, literary aspirants, he describes as admirable in the modesty which he inculcated and practised on this head.

The Oaks, Ambleside, July 11. 1844.

Mr. and Mrs. Wordsworth at dinner, along with our family party. Mr. and Mrs. Price (from Rugby), two aunts of Mrs. P.'s, and her brother, Mr. Rose, a young clergyman (a devout admirer of Wordsworth), joined us at tea. A circle was made as large as our little parlour could hold. Mr. Price sat next to Mr. Wordsworth, and by design or fortunate accident, introduced some remark on the powers and the discourse of Coleridge. Mr. Wordsworth entered heartily and largely on the subject. He said that the liveliest and truest image he could give of Coleridge's talk was 'that of a majestic river, the sound or sight of whose course you caught at intervals, which was sometimes concealed by forests, sometimes lost in sand, then came flashing out broad and distinct, then again took a turn which your eye could not follow, yet you knew and felt that it was the same river: so,' he said, 'there was always a train, a stream, in Coleridge's discourse, always a connection between its parts in his own mind, though one not always perceptible to the minds of others.' Mr. Wordsworth went on to say, that in his opinion Coleridge had been spoilt as a poet by going to Germany. The bent of his mind, which was at all times very much to metaphysical theology, had there been fixed in that

direction. ‘If it had not been so,’ said Wordsworth, ‘he would have been the greatest, the most abiding poet of his age. His very faults would have made him popular (meaning his sententiousness and laboured strain), while he had enough of the essentials of a poet to make him deservedly popular in a higher sense.’

Mr. Price soon after mentioned a statement of Coleridge’s respecting himself, recorded in his ‘Table Talk,’ namely, that a visit to the battle-field of Marathon would raise in him no kindling emotion, and asked Mr. Wordsworth whether this was true as a token of his mind. At first Mr. Wordsworth said, ‘Oh! that was a mere bravado, for the sake of astonishing his hearers!’ but then, correcting himself, he added, ‘And yet it might in some sense be true, for Coleridge was not under the influence of external objects. He had extraordinary powers of summoning up an image or series of images in his own mind, and he might mean that his idea of Marathon was so vivid, that no visible observation could make it more so.’ ‘A remarkable instance of this,’ added Mr. Wordsworth, ‘is his poem, said to be “composed in the Vale of Chamouni.” Now he never was at Chamouni, or near it, in his life.’ Mr. Wordsworth next gave a somewhat humorous account of the rise and progress of the ‘Ancient Mariner.’ ‘It arose,’ he said, ‘out of the want of five pounds which Coleridge and I needed to make a tour together in Devonshire. We agreed to write jointly a poem, the subject of which Coleridge took from a dream which a friend of his had once dreamt concerning a person suffering under a dire curse from the commission of some crime.’ ‘I,’ said Wordsworth, ‘supplied the crime, the shooting of the albatross, from an incident I had met with in one of Shelvocke’s voyages. We tried the poem conjointly for a day or two, but we pulled different ways, and only a few lines of it are mine.’ From Coleridge, the discourse then turned to Scotland. Mr. Wordsworth, in his best manner, with earnest thoughts given out in noble diction, gave his reasons for thinking that as a poet Scott would not live. ‘I don’t like,’ he said, ‘to say all this, or to take to pieces some of the best reputed passages of Scott’s verse, especially in presence of my wife, because she thinks me too fastidious; but as a poet Scott *cannot* live, for

he has never in verse written anything addressed to the immortal part of man. In making amusing stories in verse, he will be superseded by some newer versifier; what he writes in the way of natural description is merely rhyming nonsense.' As a prose writer, Mr. Wordsworth admitted that Scott had touched a higher vein, because there he had really dealt with feeling and passion. As historical novels, professing to give the manners of a past time, he did not attach much value to those works of Scott's so called, because that he held to be an attempt in which success was impossible. This led to some remarks on historical writing, from which it appeared that Mr. Wordsworth has small value for anything but contemporary history. He laments that Dr. Arnold should have spent so much of his time and powers in gathering up and putting into imaginary shape the scattered fragments of the history of Rome.*

These scraps of Wordsworth's large, thoughtful, earnest discourse, seem very meagre as I note them down, and in themselves perhaps hardly worth preserving; and yet this is an evening which those who spent it in his company will long remember. His venerable head; his simple, natural, and graceful attitude in his arm-chair; his respectful attention to the slightest remarks or suggestions of others in relation to what was spoken of; his kindly benevolence of expression as he looked round now and then on the circle in our little parlour, all bent to 'devour up his discourse,' filled up and enlarged the meaning which I fear is but ill conveyed in the words as they are now set down.

(v.) LADY RICHARDSON: WORDSWORTH'S BIRTH-DAY.

On Tuesday, April the 7th, 1844, my mother† and I left Lanerigg to begin our Yorkshire journey. We arrived at Rydal Mount about three o'clock, and found the tables all tastefully decorated on the esplanade in front of the house. The Poet was standing looking at them with a very pleased expression of face; he received us very kindly, and very soon the children began to arrive. The Grasmere boys and girls came first, and took their places on the benches placed round the

* But see *Memorials of Italy*, 'Sonnets on Roman Historians.'

† Mrs. Fletcher.

gravelled part of the esplanade ; their eyes fixed with wonder and admiration on the tables covered with oranges, gingerbread, and painted eggs, ornamented with daffodils, laurels, and moss, gracefully intermixed. The plot soon began to thicken, and the scene soon became very animated. Neighbours, old and young, of all degrees, ascended to the Mount to keep the Poet's seventy-fourth birth-day, and every face looked friendly and happy. Each child brought its own mug, and held it out to be filled with tea, in which ceremony all assisted. Large baskets of currant cakes were handed round and liberally dispensed ; and as each detachment of children had satisfied themselves with tea and cake, they were moved off, to play at hide and seek among the evergreens on the grassy part of the Mount. The day was not bright, but it was soft, and not cold, and the scene, viewed from the upper windows of the house, was quite beautiful, and one I should have been very sorry not to have witnessed. It was innocent and gay, and perfectly natural. Miss F——, the donor of the fête, looked very happy, and so did all the Poet's household. The children, who amounted altogether to above 300, gave three cheers to Mr. Wordsworth and Miss F——. After some singing and dancing, and after the division of eggs, gingerbread, and oranges had taken place, we all began to disperse. We spent the night at the Oaks, and set off on our journey the following morning. The gay scene at the Mount often comes before me, as a pleasant dream. It is perhaps the only part of the island where such a reunion of all classes could have taken place without any connection of landlord and tenant, or any clerical relation, or school direction. Wordsworth, while looking at the gambols on the Mount, expressed his conviction that if such meetings could oftener take place between people of different condition, a much more friendly feeling would be created than now exists in this country between the rich and poor.

July 12th, 1844.—Wordsworth spoke much during the evening of his early intercourse with Coleridge, on some one observing that it was difficult to carry away a distinct impression from Coleridge's conversation, delightful as every one felt his outpourings to be. Wordsworth agreed, but said he was occasionally very happy in clothing an idea in words ; and he

mentioned one which was recorded in his sister's journal during a tour they all made together in Scotland. They passed a steam engine, and Wordsworth made some observation to the effect that it was scarcely possible to divest oneself of the impression on seeing it that it had life and volition. 'Yes,' replied Coleridge, 'it is a giant with one idea.'

He discoursed at great length on Scott's works. His poetry he considered of that kind which will always be in demand, and that the supply will always meet it, suited to the age. He does not consider that it in any way goes below the surface of things ; it does not reach to any intellectual or spiritual emotion ; it is altogether superficial, and he felt it himself to be so. His descriptions are not true to Nature ; they are addressed to the ear, not to the mind. He was a master of bodily movements in his battle-scenes ; but very little productive power was exerted in popular creations.

DUDDON EXCURSION.

On Friday, the 6th September 1844, I set off to breakfast at Rydal Mount, it being the day fixed by Mr. Wordsworth for our long-projected excursion to the Valley of the Duddon.

The rain fell in torrents, and it became doubtful whether we should set off or not ; but as it was a thunder-shower, we waited till it was over, and then Wordsworth, Mr. Quillinan, Miss Hutchinson, and I, set forth in our carriage to Coniston, where we were to find the Rydal-Mount carriage awaiting us with Mr. Hutchinson. Wordsworth talked very agreeably on the way to Coniston, and repeated several verses of his own, which he seemed pleased that Serjeant Talfourd had repeated to him the day before. He mentioned a singular instance of T. Campbell's inaccuracy of memory in having actually printed as his own a poem of Wordsworth's, 'The Complaint : ' he repeated it beautifully as we were going up the hill to Coniston. On reaching the inn in the village of Coniston, the rain again fell in torrents. At length, the carriages were ordered to the door with the intention of our returning home ; but just as they were ready the sun broke out, and we turned the horse's head towards Ulpha Kirk. The right bank of Coniston was all new to me after we passed the village, and Old Man of Coniston. The scenery ceases to

be bold and rugged, but is very pleasing, the road passing through hazel copses, the openings showing nice little corn-fields and comfortable detached farms, with old uncropped trees standing near them ; some very fine specimens of old ash trees, which I longed to transport to Easedale, where they have been so cruelly lopped. The opening towards the sea, as we went on, was very pleasing ; but the first striking view of the Duddon was looking down upon it soon after we passed Broughton, where you turn to the right, and very soon after perceive the peculiar beauty of the valley, although it does not take its wild and dreamlike beauty till you pass Ulpha Kirk. We reversed the order of the sonnets, and saw the river first, ‘in radiant progress tow’rd the deep,’ instead of tracing this ‘child of the clouds’ from its cradle in the lofty waste. We reached the Kirk of Ulpha between five and six. The appearance of the little farm-house inn at once made anything approaching to a dinner an impossibility had we wished it ever so much ; but in due time we had tea and boiled ham, with two eggs apiece, and were much invigorated by this our first Duddonian meal. The hostess was evidently surprised that we thought of remaining all night, so humbly did she think of the accommodation she had to offer. She remembered Mr. Wordsworth sleeping there fifteen years ago, because it was just after the birth of her daughter, a nice comely girl who attended us at tea. Mr. Quillinan showed great good nature and unselfishness in the arrangements he made, and the care he took of the admirable horse, which I saw him feeding out of a tub, a manger being too great a refinement for Ulpha.

After tea, although it was getting dark, we went to the churchyard, which commands a beautiful view towards Seathwaite, and we then walked in that direction, through a lane where the walls were more richly covered by moss and fern than any I ever saw before. A beautiful dark-coloured tributary to the Duddon comes down from the moors on the left hand, about a mile from Ulpha ; and soon after we had passed the small bridge over this stream, Mr. Wordsworth recollects a well which he had discovered some thirty or forty years before. We went off the road in search of it, through a shadowy, embowered path ; and as it was almost dark we shculd probably have failed

in finding it, had we not met a very tiny boy, with a can of water in his hand, who looked at us in speechless amazement, when the Poet said, ‘Is there a well here, my little lad?’ We found the well, and then joined the road again by another path, leaving the child to ponder whether we were creatures of earth or air.

Saturday morning was cloudy but soft, and lovely in its hazy effects. When I went out about seven, I saw Wordsworth going a few steps, and then moving on, and stopping again, in a very abstracted manner; so I kept back. But when he saw me, he advanced, and took me again to the churchyard to see the morning effects, which were very lovely. He said he had not slept well, that the recollection of former days and people had crowded upon him, and, ‘most of all, my dear sister; and when I thought of her state, and of those who had passed away, Coleridge, and Southey, and many others, while I am left with all my many infirmities, if not sins, in full consciousness, how could I sleep? and then I took to the alteration of sonnets, and that made the matter worse still.’ Then suddenly stopping before a little bunch of harebell, which, along with some parsley fern, grew out of the wall near us, he exclaimed, ‘How perfectly beautiful that is!

“Would that the little flowers that grow could live,
Conscious of half the pleasure that they give.”

He then expatiated on the inexhaustible beauty of the arrangements of Nature, its power of combining in the most secret recesses, and that it must be for some purpose of beneficence that such operations existed. After breakfast, we got into the cart of the inn, which had a seat swung into it, upon which a bolster was put, in honour, I presume, of the Poet Laureate. In this we jogged on to Seathwaite, getting out to ascend a craggy eminence on the right, which Mrs. Wordsworth admired: the view from it is very striking. You see from it all the peculiarities of the vale, the ravine where the Duddon ‘deserts the haunts of men,’ ‘the spots of stationary sunshine,’ and the homesteads which are scattered here and there, both on the heights and in the lower ground near protecting rocks and craggy steeps. Seathwaite I had a perfect recollection of; and the way we approached it twenty years ago, from Coniston over

Walna Scar, is the way Mr. Wordsworth still recommends as the most beautiful. We went on some distance beyond the chapel, and every new turning and opening among the hills allured us on, till at last the Poet was obliged to exercise the word of command, that we should proceed no further. The return is always a flat thing, so I shall not detail it, except that we reached our respective homes in good time; and I hope I shall never cease to think with gratitude and pleasure of the kindness of my honoured guide through the lovely scenes he has rescued from obscurity, although it happily still remains an uninitiated region, ‘which stands in no need of the veil of twilight to soften or disguise its features: as it glistens in the morning’s sun it fills the spectator’s heart with gladsomeness.’

November 21.—My mother and I called at Rydal last Saturday, to see the Wordsworths after their autumnal excursion. We found him only at home, looking in great vigour and much the better for this little change of scene and circumstance. He spoke with much interest of a communication he had had from a benevolent surgeon at Manchester, an admirer of his, who thinks that a great proportion of the blindness in this country might be prevented by attention to the diseases of the eye in childhood. He spoke of two very interesting blind ladies he had seen at Leamington, one of whom had been at Rydal Mount a short time before her ‘total eclipse,’ and now derived the greatest comfort from the recollection of these beautiful scenes, almost the last she looked on. He spoke of his own pleasure in returning to them, and of the effect of the first view from ‘Orrest Head,’ the point mentioned in his ‘unfortunate* sonnet, which has,’ he said, ‘you are aware, exposed me to the most unlooked for accusations. They actually accuse me of desiring to interfere with the innocent enjoyments of the poor, by preventing this district becoming accessible to them by a railway. Now I deny that it is to that class that this kind of scenery is either the most improving or the most attractive. For the very poor the great God of Nature has mercifully spread out His Bible everywhere; the common sunshine, green fields, the blue sky, the shining river, are everywhere to be met with in this country; and it is only an individual here and there among the uneducated classes who feels very deeply the poetry of lakes and mountains;

* See the Sonnet and Letters on the Furness Railway (vol. ii. p. 321). G.

and such persons would rather wander about where they like, than rush through the country in a railway. It is not, therefore, the poor, as a class, that would benefit morally or mentally by a railway conveyance; while to the educated classes, to whom such scenes as these give enjoyment of the purest kind, the effect would be almost entirely destroyed.'

Wednesday, 20th Nov.—A most remarkable halo was seen round the moon soon after five o'clock to-day; the colours of the rainbow were most brilliant, and the circle was entire for about five minutes.

Thursday, Mr. Wordsworth dined here with the Balls, Davys, and Mr. Jefferies. Mr. W. spoke with much delight of the moon the day before, and said his servant, whom he called 'dear James,' called his attention to it.

Wednesday, Dec. 18th.—The Wordsworths and Quillinans sat two hours with us. He said he thought [Dr. Arnold] was mistaken in the philosophy of his view of the danger of Milton's Satan being represented without horns and hoofs; that Milton's conception was as true as it was grand; that making sin ugly was a common-place notion compared with making it beautiful outwardly, and inwardly a hell. It assumed every form of ambition and worldliness, the form in which sin attacks the highest natures.

This day, Sunday, the 9th of February, the snow is again falling fast, but very gently. Yesterday, the 8th, was a beautiful day. We had a very pleasant visit of above an hour from Wordsworth and his wife. He was in excellent spirits, and repeated with a solemn beauty, quite peculiar to himself, a sonnet he had lately composed on 'Young England;' and his indignant burst 'Where then is *old*, our dear old England?' was one of the finest bursts of Nature and Art combined I have ever heard. My dear mother's face, too, while he was repeating it, was a fine addition to the picture; and I could not help feeling they were both noble specimens of 'dear old England.' Mrs. Wordsworth, too, is a goodly type of another class of old England, more thoroughly English perhaps than either of the others, but they made an admirable trio; and Mrs. Wordsworth's face expressed more admiration of her husband in his bardic mood than I ever

saw before. He discussed mesmerism very agreeably, stating strongly his detestation of clairvoyance; not only on the presumption of its being altogether false, but supposing it, for argument sake, to be true, then he thinks it would be an engine of enormous evil, putting it in the power of any malicious person to blast the character of another, and shaking to the very foundations the belief in individual responsibility. He is not disposed to reject without examination the assertions with regard to the curative powers of mesmerism. He spoke to-day with pleasure of having heard that Mr. Lockhart had been struck by his lines from a MSS. poem, printed in his Railway-Sonnet pamphlet.

February 24th.—Snow still on the ground. It has never been quite clear of snow since the 27th January. Partial thaws have allowed us to peep out into the world of Ambleside and Rydal; and last Saturday we drank tea at Foxhow, and met the Wordsworths and Miss F—. He is very happy to have his friend home again, and was in a very agreeable mood. He repeated his sonnet on the ‘Pennsylvanians,’ and again that on ‘Young England,’ which I admire so much.

March 6th.—Wordsworth, whom we met yesterday at dinner at the Oaks, expressed his dislike to monuments in churches; partly from the absurdity and falsehood of the epitaphs which sometimes belonged to them, and partly from their injuring the architectural beauties of the edifice, as they grievously did in Westminster Abbey and many other cathedrals. He made an exception in favour of those old knightly monuments, which he admitted added to the solemnity of the scene, and were in keeping with the buildings; and he added, ‘I must also except another monument which once made a deep impression on my mind. It was in a small church near St. Alban’s; and I once left London in the afternoon, so as to sleep at St. Alban’s the first night, and have a few hours of evening light to visit this church. It was before the invention of railways, and I determined that I would always do the same; but, the year after, railways existed, and I have never been able to carry out my project again: all wandering is now over. Well, I went to this small country church; and just opposite the door at which you enter, the figure of the great Lord Bacon, in pure white, was

the first thing that presented itself. I went there to see his tomb, but I did not expect to see himself; and it impressed me deeply. There he was, a man whose fame extends over the whole civilised world, sitting calmly, age after age, in white robes of pure alabaster, in this small country church, seldom visited except by some stray traveller, he having desired to be interred in this spot, to lie near his mother.'

On referring to Mallet's Life of Bacon, I see he mentions that he was privately buried at St. Michael's church, near St. Alban's; and it adds, 'The spot that contains his remains lay obscure and undistinguished, till the gratitude of a private man, formerly his servant' (Sir Thomas Meautys), 'erected a monument to his name and memory.' This makes it probable that the likeness is a correct one.

November 8th, 1845.—On our way to take an early dinner at Foxhow yesterday, we met the Poet at the foot of his own hill, and he engaged us to go to tea to the Mount on our way home to hear their adventures, he and his Mary having just returned from a six weeks' wander among their friends. During their absence we always feel that the road between Grasmere and Ambleside is wanting in something, beautiful as it is. We reached the Mount before six, and found dear Mrs. Wordsworth much restored by her tour. She has enjoyed the visit to her kith and kin in Herefordshire extremely, and we had a nice comfortable chat round the fire and the tea-table. After tea, in speaking of the misfortune it was when a young man did not seem more inclined to one profession than another, Wordsworth said that he had always some feeling of indulgence for men at that age who felt such a difficulty. He had himself passed through it, and had incurred the strictures of his friends and relations on this subject. He said that after he had finished his college course, he was in great doubt as to what his future employment should be. He did not feel himself good enough for the Church, he felt that his mind was not properly disciplined for that holy office, and that the struggle between his conscience and his impulses would have made life a torture. He also shrank from the law, although Southey often told him that he was well fitted for the higher parts of the profession. He had studied military history with great interest, and the strategy of war; and he always fancied that he had talents for

command ; and he at one time thought of a military life, but then he was without connections, and he felt if he were ordered to the West Indies his talents would not save him from the yellow fever, and he gave that up. At this time he had only a hundred a year. Upon this he lived, and travelled, and married, for it was not until the late Lord Lonsdale came into possession that the money which was due to them was restored. He mentioned this to show how difficult it often was to judge of what was passing in a young man's mind, but he thought that for the generality of men, it was much better that they should be early led to the exercise of a profession of their own choice.

December 1846.—Henry Fletcher and I dined at the Mount on the 21st of this month. The party consisted of Mr. Crabb Robinson (their Christmas guest), Mrs. Arnold, Miss Martineau, and ourselves. My mother's cold was too bad to allow her to go, which I regretted, as it was, like all their little meetings, most sociable and agreeable. Wordsworth was much pleased with a little notice of his new edition in the *Examiner*; he thought it very well done. He expressed himself very sweetly at dinner on the pleasant terms of neighbourly kindness we enjoyed in the valleys. It will be pleasant in after times to remember his words, and still more his manner when he said this, it was done with such perfect simplicity and equality of feeling, without the slightest reference to self, and I am sure without thinking of himself at the time as more than one of the little circle whose friendly feeling he was commanding.

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October 1846.—Wordsworth dined with us one day last week, and was in much greater vigour than I have seen him all this summer.
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He mentioned incidentally that the spelling of our language was very much fixed in the time of Charles the Second, and that the attempts which had been made since, and are being made in the present day, were not likely to succeed. He entered his protest as usual against [Carlyle's] style, and said that since Johnson no writer had done so much to vitiate the English language. He considers Lord Chesterfield the last good English writer before Johnson. Then came the Scotch historians, who did infinite mischief to style, with the exception of Smollett, who

wrote good pure English. He quite agreed to the saying that all great poets wrote good prose ; he said there was not one exception. He does not think Burns's prose equal to his verse, but this he attributes to his writing his letters in English words, while in his verse he was not trammelled in this way, but let his numbers have their own way.

Lancrigg, November.—Mr. and Mrs. Wordsworth took an early dinner with us on the 26th of this month. He was very vigorous, and spoke of his majority at Glasgow, also of his reception at Oxford. He told us of an application he had just had from a Glasgow publisher that he should write a sonnet in praise of Fergusson and Allan Ramsay, to prefix to a new edition of those Poets which was about to appear. He intended to reply, that Burns's lines to Fergusson would be a much more appropriate tribute than anything he could write ; and he went on to say that Burns owed much to Fergusson, and that he had taken the plan of many of his poems from Fergusson, and the measure also. He did not think this at all detracted from the merit of Burns, for he considered it a much higher effort of genius to excel in degree, than to strike out what may be called an original poem. He spoke highly of the purity of language of the Scotch poets of an earlier period, Gavin Douglas and others, and said that they greatly excelled the English poets, after Chaucer, which he attributed to the distractions of England during the wars of York and Lancaster.

December 25th, 1846.—My mother and I called at Rydal Mount yesterday early, to wish our dear friends the blessings of the season. Mrs. W. met us at the door most kindly, and we found him before his good fire in the dining-room, with a flock of robins feasting at the window. He had an old tattered book in his hand ; and as soon as he had given us a cordial greeting, he said, in a most animated manner, ‘I must read to you what Mary and I have this moment finished. It is a passage in the Life of Thomas Elwood.’ He then read to us the following extract :

‘ Some little time before I went to Alesbury prison, I was desired by my quondam master, Milton, to take an house for him in the neighbourhood where I dwell, that he might get out of the city, for the safety of himself and his family, the pestilence then growing hot in London. I took a pretty box for him in

Giles-Chalford, a mile from me, of which I gave him notice ; and intended to have waited on him, and seen him well settled in it, but was prevented by that imprisonment.

‘ But now being released, and returned home, I soon made a visit to him, to welcome him into the country.

‘ After some common discourses had passed between us, he called for a manuscript of his, which being brought, he delivered to me, bidding me take it home with me and read it at my leisure ; and when I had so done, return it to him with my judgment thereupon.

‘ When I came home, and had set myself to read it, I found it was that excellent poem which he entitled ‘ Paradise Lost.’ After I had with the best attention read it through, I made him another visit, and returned him his book with due acknowledgment of the favour he had done me in communicating it to me. He asked me how I liked it, and what I thought of it, which I modestly, but freely told him ; and after some further discourse about it, I pleasantly said to him, “ Thou hast said much here of Paradise lost, but what hast thou to say of Paradise found ? ” He made me no answer, but sate some time in a muse ; then brake off that discourse, and fell upon another subject. After the sickness was over, and the city well cleansed and become safely habitable again, he returned thither ; and when afterwards I went to wait on him there (which I seldom failed of doing whenever my occasions drew me to London), he showed me his second poem, called “ Paradise Regained ;” and in a pleasant tone said to me, “ This is owing to you, for you put it into my head by the question you put to me at Chalford, which before I had not thought of.” *But from this digression I return to the family I then lived in.*

Wordsworth was highly diverted with the *apology* of the worthy Quaker, for the *digression*, which has alone saved him from oblivion. He offered to send us the old book, which came a few days after ; and I shall add another digression in favour of John Milton, to whom he appears to have been introduced about the year 1661, by a Dr. Paget. It is thus notified *apropos* to Thomas Elwood feeling a desire for more learning than he possessed, which having expressed to Isaac Pennington, with whom he himself lived as tutor to his children, he says, ‘ Isaac Pennington had an intimate acquaintance with Dr. Paget, a

physician of note in London, and he with John Milton, a gentleman of great note for learning throughout the learned world, for the accurate pieces he had written on various subjects and occasions. This person having filled a public station in the former times, lived now a private and retired life in London, and, having wholly lost his sight, kept always a man to read to him, which usually was the son of some gentleman of his acquaintance, whom in kindness he took to improve in his learning.

‘ He received me courteously, as well for the sake of Dr. Paget, who introduced me, as of Isaac Pennington who recommended me, to both whom he bore a good respect; and having inquired divers things of me, with respect to my former progression in learning, he dismissed me to provide myself of such accommodations as might be most suitable to my future studies.

‘ I went, therefore, and took myself a lodging as near to his house, which was then in Jewin-street, as conveniently I could, and from thenceforward went every day in the afternoon (except on the first days of the week), and sitting by him in his dining-room, read to him in such books in the Latin tongue as he pleased to hear me read.’

(vi.) MRS. DAVY (CONTINUED).

The Oaks, Ambleside, Jan. 15. 1845.

We dined to-day at Rydal Mount. Mr. Wordsworth, during dinner, grave and silent, till, on some remark having been made on the present condition of the Church, he most unreservedly gave his own views; and gave expression, as I have only once heard him give before, to his own earnest, devout, humble feelings as a Christian. In the evening, being led by some previous conversation to speak of St. Paul, he said, ‘ Oh, what a character that is! how well we know him! How human, yet how noble! How little outward sufferings moved him! It is not in speaking of these that he calls himself wretched; it is when he speaks of the inward conflict. Paul and David,’ he said, ‘ may be called the two Shakspearian characters in the Bible; both types, as it were, of human nature in its strength and its weakness. Moses is grand, but then it is chiefly from position, from the office he had entrusted to him. We do not know Moses as a man, as a brother man.’

April 7, 1846.—I went to the Mount to-day, to pay my respects to Mr. Wordsworth on his birthday. I found him and dear Mrs. Wordsworth very happy, in the arrival of their four grandsons. The two elder are to go to Rossall next week. Some talk concerning schools led Mr. Wordsworth into a discourse, which, in relation to himself, I thought very interesting, on the dangers of emulation, as used in the way of help to school progress. Mr. Wordsworth thinks that envy is too likely to go along with this, and therefore would hold it to be unsafe. ‘In my own case,’ he said, ‘I never felt emulation with another man but once, and that was accompanied by envy. It is a horrid feeling.’ This ‘once’ was in the study of Italian, which, he continued, ‘I entered on at college along with ——’ (I forgot the name he mentioned). ‘I never engaged in the proper studies of the university, so that in these I had no temptation to envy any one; but I remember with pain that I *had* envious feelings when my fellow-student in Italian got before me. I was his superior in many departments of mind, but he was the better Italian scholar, and I envied him. The annoyance this gave me made me feel that emulation was dangerous for *me*, and it made me very thankful that as a boy I never experienced it. I felt very early the force of the words, “Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect,” and as a teacher, or friend, or counsellor of youth, I would hold forth no other motive to exertion than this. There is, I think, none other held forth in the gospels. No permission is given to emulation there. . . . There must always be a danger of incurring the passion of vanity by emulation. If we try to outstrip a fellow-creature, and succeed, we may naturally enough be proud. The true lesson of humility is to strive after conformity to that excellence which we never can surpass, never even by a great distance attain to.’ There was, in the whole manner as well as matter of Mr. Wordsworth’s discourse on this subject, a deep veneration for the will of God concerning us, which I shall long remember with interest and delight—I hope with profit. ‘Oh! one other time,’ he added, smiling, ‘one other time in my life I felt envy. It was when my brother was nearly certain of success in a foot race with me. I tripped up his heels. This *must* have been envy.’

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Lesketh How, Jan. 11. 1847.

In a morning visit by our fireside to-day from Mr. Wordsworth, something led to the mention of Milton, whose poetry, he said, was earlier a favourite with him than that of Shakespeare. Speaking of Milton's not allowing his daughters to learn the meaning of the Greek they read to him, or at least not exerting himself to teach it to them, he admitted that this seemed to betoken a low estimate of the condition and purposes of the female mind. 'And yet, where could he have picked up such notions,' said Mr. W., 'in a country which had seen so many women of learning and talent? But his opinion of what women ought to be, it may be presumed, is given in the unfallen Eve, as contrasted with the right condition of man before his Maker:

"He for God only, she for God in him."

'Now that,' said Mr. Wordsworth, earnestly, 'is a low, a very low and a very false estimate of woman's condition.' He was amused on my showing him the (almost) contemporary notice of Milton by Wycherly, and, after reading it, spoke a good deal of the obscurity of men of genius in or near their own times. 'But the most singular thing,' he continued, 'is, that in all the writings of Bacon there is not one allusion to Shakspeare.'

Lesketh How, Jan. 10. 1849.

A long fireside visit from Mr. Wordsworth this morning, in highly sociable spirits; speaking much of old days and old acquaintances. He spoke with much regret of Scott's careless views about money, and said that he had often spoken to him of the duty of economy, as a means to insure literary independence. Scott's reply always was, 'Oh, I can make as much as I please by writing.' 'This,' said Mr. W., 'was marvellous to me, who had never written a line with a view to profit.' Speaking of his own prose writing, he said, that but for Coleridge's irregularity of purpose he should probably have left much more in that kind behind him. When Coleridge was proposing to publish his 'Friend,' he (Mr. Wordsworth) offered contributions. Coleridge expressed himself pleased with the offer, but said, 'I must arrange my principles for the work, and when that is done I shall be glad of your aid.' But this 'arrangement of principles' never took place. Mr. Wordsworth added, 'I think my nephew, Dr.

Wordsworth,* will, after my death, collect and publish all I have written in prose.'

On this day, as I have heard him more than once before, Mr. Wordsworth, in a way very earnest, and to me very impressive and remarkable, disclaimed all value for, all concern about, posthumous fame.†

(e) CONVERSATIONS AND REMINISCENCES RECORDED BY
THE (NOW) BISHOP OF LINCOLN, &c.

REMEMBER, first read the ancient classical authors; *then* come to us; and you will be able to judge for yourself which of us is worth reading.

The first book of Homer appears to be independent of the rest. The plan of the *Odyssey* is more methodical than that of the *Iliad*. The character of Achilles seems to me one of the grandest ever conceived. There is something awful in it, particularly in the circumstance of his acting under an abiding foresight of his own death. One day, conversing with Payne Knight and Uvedale Price concerning Homer, I expressed my admiration of Nestor's speech, as eminently natural, where he tells the Greek leaders that *they* are mere children in comparison with the heroes of *old* whom *he* had known.‡ ‘But,’ said Knight and Price, ‘that passage is spurious!’ However, I will not part with it. It is interesting to compare the same characters (Ajax, for instance) as treated by Homer, and then afterwards by the Greek dramatists, and to mark the difference of handling. In the plays of Euripides, politics come in as a disturbing force: Homer's characters act on physical impulse. There is more *introversion* in the dramatist: whence Aristotle rightly calls him *τραγικώτατος*. The tower-scene, where Helen comes into the presence of Priam and the old Trojans, displays one of the most beautiful pictures anywhere to be seen. Priam's speech§ on that occasion is a striking proof of the courtesy and delicacy of the Homeric age, or, at least, of Homer himself.

Catullus translated literally from the Greek; succeeding Roman writers did not so, because Greek had then become the

* On another occasion, I believe, he intimated a desire that his works in Prose should be edited by his son-in-law, Mr. Quillinan. (*Memoirs*, ii. 466.)

† *Memoirs*, ii. 437-66.

‡ *Iliad*, i. 260.

§ *Ibid.* iii. 156.

fashionable, universal language. They did not translate, but they paraphrased ; the ideas remaining the same, their dress different. Hence the attention of the poets of the Augustan age was principally confined to the happy selection of the most appropriate words and elaborate phrases ; and hence arises the difficulty of translating them.

The characteristics ascribed by Horace to Pindar in his ode, ‘Pindarum quisquis,’ &c. are not found in his extant writings. Horace had many lyrical effusions of the Theban bard which we have not. How graceful is Horace’s modesty in his ‘Ego apis Matinae More modoque,’ as contrasted with the Dircaeae Swan ! Horace is my great favourite : I love him dearly.

I admire Virgil’s high moral tone : for instance, that sublime ‘Aude, hospes, contemnere opes,’ &c. and ‘his dantem jura Catonem !’ What courage and independence of spirit is there ! There is nothing more imaginative and awful than the passage,

‘ ————— Arcades ipsum
Credunt se vidisse Jovem,’ &c.*

In describing the weight of sorrow and fear on Dido’s mind, Virgil shows great knowledge of human nature, especially in that exquisite touch of feeling,†

‘ Hoc visum nulli, non ipsi effata sorori.’

The ministry of Confession is provided to satisfy the natural desire for some relief from the load of grief. Here, as in so many other respects, the Church of Rome adapts herself with consummate skill to our nature, and is strong by our weaknesses. Almost all her errors and corruptions are abuses of what is good.

I think Buchanan’s ‘Maiae Calendae’ equal in sentiment, if not in elegance, to anything in Horace ; but your brother Charles, to whom I repeated it the other day, pointed out a false quantity in it.‡ Happily this had escaped me.

When I began to give myself up to the profession of a poet for life, I was impressed with a conviction, that there were four English poets whom I must have continually before me as examples—Chaucer, Shakspeare, Spenser, and Milton. These I

* *Aen.* viii. 352.

† *Ibid.* iv. 455.

‡ If I remember right, it is in the third line,

‘ Ludisque dicatae, jocisque ;’

a strange blunder, for Buchanan must have read Horace’s,
• ‘ Quid dedicatum poscit Apollinem,’
a hundred times.

must study, and equal if I could ; and I need not think of the rest.*

I have been charged by some with disparaging Pope and Dryden. This is not so. I have committed much of both to memory. As far as Pope goes, he succeeds ; but his Homer is not Homer, but Pope.

I cannot account for Shakspeare's low estimate of his own writings, except from the sublimity, the superhumanity, of his genius. They were infinitely below his conception of what they might have been, and ought to have been.

The mind often does not think, when it thinks that it is thinking. If we were to give our whole soul to anything, as the bee does to the flower, I conceive there would be little difficulty in any intellectual employment. Hence there is no excuse for obscurity in writing.

'Macbeth,' is the best conducted of Shakspeare's plays. The fault of 'Julius Cæsar,' 'Hamlet,' and 'Lear,' is, that the interest is not, and by the nature of the case could not be, sustained to their conclusion. The death of Julius Cæsar is too overwhelming an incident for *any* stage of the drama but the *last*. It is an incident to which the mind clings, and from which it will not be torn away to share in other sorrows. The same may be said of the madness of Lear. Again, the opening of 'Hamlet' is full of exhausting interest. There is more mind in 'Hamlet' than in any other play, more knowledge of human nature. The first act is incomparable. . . . There is too much of an every-day sick room in the death-bed scene of Catherine, in 'Henry the Eighth'—too much of leeches and apothecaries' vials. . . . 'Zanga' is a bad imitation of 'Othello.' Garrick never ventured on Othello : he could not submit to a blacked face. He rehearsed the part once. During the rehearsal Quin entered, and, having listened for some time with attention, exclaimed, 'Well done, David ! but where's the teakettle ?' alluding to the print of Hogarth, where a black boy follows his mistress with a teakettle in his hand. . . . In stature Garrick was short. . . . A fact which conveys a high notion of his powers is, that he was able to *act out* the absurd stage-costume of those days. He represented Coriolanus

* This paragraph was communicated by Mr. H. C. Robinson.

in the attire of Cheapside. I remember hearing from Sir G. Beaumont, that while he was venting, as Lear, the violent paroxysms of his rage in the awful tempest scene, his wig happened to fall off. The accident did not produce the slightest effect on the gravity of the house, so strongly had he impregnated every breast with his own emotions.

Some of my friends (H. C. for instance) doubt whether poetry on contemporary persons and events can be good. But I instance Spenser's 'Marriage,' and Milton's 'Lycidas.' True, the 'Persae' is one of the worst of Aeschylus's plays; at least, in my opinion.

Milton is falsely represented by some as a democrat. He was an aristocrat in the truest sense of the word. See the quotation from him in my 'Convention of Cintra.'* Indeed, he spoke in very proud and contemptuous terms of the populace. 'Comus' is rich in beautiful and sweet flowers, and in exuberant leaves of genius; but the ripe and mellow fruit is in 'Samson Agonistes.' When he wrote that, his mind was Hebraized. Indeed, his genius fed on the writings of the Hebrew prophets. This arose, in some degree, from the temper of the times; the Puritan lived in the Old Testament, almost to the exclusion of the New.

The works of the old English dramatists are the gardens of our language.

One of the noblest things in Milton is the description of that sweet, quiet morning in the 'Paradise Regained,' after that terrible night of howling wind and storm. The contrast is divine.†

What a virulent democrat —— is! A man ill at ease with his own conscience is sure to quarrel with all government, order, and law.

The influence of Locke's Essay was not due to its own merits, which are considerable; but to external circumstances. It came forth at a happy opportunity, and coincided with the prevalent opinions of the time. The Jesuit doctrines concerning the papal power in deposing kings, and absolving subjects from their allegiance, had driven some Protestant theologians to take refuge in the theory of the divine right of kings. This

* Page 174 (vol. i.), where Milton speaks of the evils suffered by a nation, 'unless men more than vulgar, bred up in the knowledge of ancient and illustrious deeds, conduct its affairs.'

† *Paradise Regained*, iv. 431.

theory was unpalatable to the world at large, and others invented the more popular doctrine of a social contract, in its place ; a doctrine which history refutes. But Locke did what he could to accommodate this principle to his own system.

The only basis on which property can rest is right derived from prescription.

The best of Locke's works, as it seems to me, is that in which he attempts the least—his *Conduct of the Understanding*.

In the Summer of 1827, speaking of some of his contemporaries, Wordsworth said, T. Moore has great natural genius ; but he is too lavish of brilliant ornament. His poems smell of the perfumer's and milliner's shops. He is not content with a ring and a bracelet, but he must have rings in the ears, rings on the nose—rings everywhere.

Walter Scott is not a careful composer. He allows himself many liberties, which betray a want of respect for his reader. For instance, he is too fond of inversions ; i.e. he often places the verb before the substantive, and the accusative before the verb. W. Scott quoted, as from me,

'The swan on sweet St. Mary's lake
Floats double, swan and shadow,'

instead of *still* ; thus obscuring my idea, and betraying his own uncritical principles of composition.

Byron seems to me deficient in *feeling*. Professor Wilson, I think, used to say that 'Beppo' was his best poem ; because all his faults were there brought to a height. I never read the 'English Bards' through. His critical prognostications have, for the most part, proved erroneous.

Sir James Mackintosh said of me to M. de Staël, 'Wordsworth is not a great poet, but he is the greatest man among poets.' Madame de Staël complained of my style.

Now whatever may be the result of my experiment in the subjects which I have chosen for poetical composition—be they vulgar or be they not,—I can say without vanity, that I have bestowed great pains on my *style*, full as much as any of my contemporaries have done on theirs. I yield to none in *love for my art*. I, therefore, labour at it with reverence, affection, and industry. My main endeavour as to style has been that my poems should be written in pure intelligible English. Lord Byron

has spoken severely of my compositions. However faulty they may be, I do not think that I ever could have prevailed upon myself to print such lines as he has done ; for instance,

‘I stood at Venice on the Bridge of Sighs,
A palace and a prison on each hand.’

Some person ought to write a critical review, analysing Lord Byron’s language, in order to guard others against imitating him in these respects.

Shelley is one of the best *artists* of us all : I mean in workmanship of style.

At Calgarth, dining with Mrs. and the Miss Watsons . . . a very fine portrait of the late Bishop in the dining-room. . . . Mr. Wordsworth there : a very agreeable party. Walked home with him in the evening to Rydal. It rained all the way. We met a poor woman in the road. She sobbed as she passed us. Mr. Wordsworth was much affected with her condition : she was swollen with dropsy, and slowly hobbling along with a stick, having been driven from one lodging to another. It was a dark stormy night. Mr. Wordsworth brought her back to the Lowwood Inn, where, by the landlord’s leave, she was housed in one of his barns.

One day I met Mr. M. T. Sadler at the late Archbishop’s. Sadler did not know me ; and before dinner he began to launch forth in a critical dissertation on contemporary English Poetry. ‘Among living poets, your Grace may know there is one called Wordsworth, whose writings the world calls childish and puerile, but I think some of them wonderfully pathetic.’ ‘Now, Mr. Sadler,’ said the Archbishop, ‘what a scrape you are in ! here is Mr. Wordsworth : but go down with him to dinner, and you will find that, though a great poet, he does not belong to the “genus irritabile.”’ This was very happy.

After returning one day from church at Addington, I took the liberty of saying a few words on the sermon we had heard. It was a very homely performance. ‘I am rather surprised, my Lord Archbishop, that when your Grace can have the choice of so many preachers in England, you do not provide better for yourself.’ ‘Oh !’ said he, ‘I think I can bear bad preaching better than most people, and I therefore keep it to myself.’ This

seemed to me a very pleasing trait in the gentle and loveable character of that admirable man.

Patriarchal usages have not quite deserted us of these valleys. This morning (new year's day) you were awakened early by the minstrels playing under the eaves, ‘Honour to Mr. Wordsworth !’ ‘Honour to Mrs. Wordsworth !’ and so to each member of the household by name, servants included, each at his own window. These customs bind us together as a family, and are as beneficial as they are delightful. May they never disappear!

In my Ode on the ‘Intimations of Immortality in Childhood,’ I do not profess to give a literal representation of the state of the affections and of the moral being in childhood. I record my own feelings at that time—my absolute spirituality, my ‘all-soulness,’ if I may so speak. At that time I could not believe that I should lie down quietly in the grave, and that my body would moulder into dust.

Many of my poems have been influenced by my own circumstances when I was writing them. ‘The Warning’ was composed on horseback, while I was riding from Moresby in a snow-storm. Hence the simile in that poem,

‘While thoughts press on and feelings overflow,
And quick words round him fall like *flakes* of snow.’

In the ‘Ecclesiastical Sonnets,’ the lines concerning the Monk (Sonnet xxi.),

‘Within his cell,
Round the decaying trunk of human pride,
At morn, and eve, and midnight’s silent hour,
Do penitential cogitations cling :
Like ivy round some ancient elm they twine
In grisly folds and strictures serpentine ;
Yet while they strangle, a fair growth they bring
For recompence—their own perennial bower ;—

were suggested to me by a beautiful tree clad as thus described, which you may remember in Lady Fleming’s park at Rydal, near the path to the upper waterfall.

S——, in the work you mentioned to me, confounds *imagery* and *imagination*. Sensible objects really existing, and felt to exist, are *imagery*; and they may form the materials of a descriptive poem, where objects are delineated as they are. *Imagination* is a subjective term: it deals with objects not as they are, but as they appear to the mind of the poet.

The imagination is that intellectual lens through the medium of which the poetical observer sees the objects of his observation, modified both in form and colour ; or it is that inventive dresser of dramatic *tableaux*, by which the persons of the play are invested with new drapery, or placed in new attitudes ; or it is that chemical faculty by which elements of the most different nature and distant origin are blended together into one harmonious and homogeneous whole.

A beautiful instance of the modifying and *investive* power of imagination may be seen in that noble passage of Dyer's 'Ruins of Rome,'* where the poet hears the voice of Time ; and in Thomson's description of the streets of Cairo, expecting the arrival of the caravan which had perished in the storm.†

Read all Cowley ; he is very valuable to a collector of English sound sense. . . . Burns's 'Scots wha hae' is poor as a lyric composition.

Ariosto and Tasso are very absurdly depressed in order to elevate Dante. Ariosto is not always sincere ; Spenser always so.

I have tried to read Goethe. I never could succeed. Mr. —— refers me to his 'Iphigenia,' but I there recognise none of the dignified simplicity, none of the health and vigour which the heroes and heroines of antiquity possess in the writings of Homer. The lines of Lucretius describing the immolation of Iphigenia are worth the whole of Goethe's long poem. Again, there is a profligacy, an inhuman sensuality, in his works which is utterly revolting. I am not intimately acquainted with them generally. But I take up my ground on the first canto of 'Wilhelm Meister,' and, as the attorney-general of human nature, I there indict him for wantonly outraging the sympathies of humanity. Theologians tell us of the degraded nature of man ; and they tell us what is true. Yet man is essentially a moral agent, and there is that immortal and unextinguishable yearning for something pure and spiritual which will plead against these poetical sensualists as long as man remains what he is.

Scientific men are often too fond of aiming to be men of the

* 1. 37: 'The pilgrim oft,

At dead of night, 'mid his oraison, hears
Aghast the voice of TIME, disparting towers,' &c.

† Thomson's 'Summer,' 980 :

' In Cairo's crowded streets,
The impatient merchant, wondering, waits in vain,
And Mecca saddens at the long delay.'

world. They crave too much for titles, and stars, and ribbons. If Bacon had dwelt only in the court of Nature, and cared less for that of James the First, he would have been a greater man, and a happier one too.

I heard lately from young Mr. Watt a noble instance of magnanimity in an eminent French chemist. He had made a discovery, which he was informed would, if he took out a patent, realise a large fortune. ‘No,’ said he, ‘I do not live to amass money, but to discover Truth; and as long as she attends me in my investigations so long will I serve her and her only.’

Sir —— I know from my own experience was ruined by prosperity. The age of Leo X. would have shone with greater brilliance if it had had more clouds to struggle with. The age of Louis XIV. was formed by the Port Royal amid the storms and thunders of the League. Racine lived in a court till it became necessary to his existence, as his miserable death proved. Those petty courts of Germany have been injurious to its literature. They who move in them are too prone to imagine themselves to be the whole world, and compared with the whole world they are nothing more than these little specks in the texture of this hearth-rug.

As I was riding Dora’s pony from Rydal to Cambridge, I got off, as I occasionally did, to walk. I fell in with a sweet-looking peasant girl of nine or ten years old. She had been to carry her father’s dinner, who was working in the fields, and she was wheeling a little wheelbarrow, in which she collected manure from the roads for her garden at home. After some talk I gave her a penny, for which she thanked me in the sweetest way imaginable. I wish I had asked her whether she could read, and whether she went to school. But I could not help being struck with the happy arrangement which Nature has made for the education of the heart, an arrangement which it seems the object of the present age to counteract instead of to cherish and confirm. I imagined the happy delight of the father in seeing his child at a distance, and watching her as she approached to perform her errand of love. I imagined the joy of the mother in seeing her return. I am strongly of opinion (an opinion you, perhaps, have seen expressed by me in a letter to Mr. Rose*) that this is

* See vol. i. pp. 340-8. G.

the discipline which is more calculated by a thousand degrees to make a virtuous and happy nation than the all-engrossing, estranging, eleemosynary institutions for education, which perhaps communicate more *knowledge* they often lose in *wisdom*. This is a distinction which must never be lost sight of.

Education should never be wholly eleemosynary. But must the parent suffer privations for the sake of the child? Yes; for these privations endear the child to the parent, and the parent to the child; and whatever education the parent may thus gain or lose for his child, he has thus gained the noblest result of the most liberal education for himself—the habit of self-denial.

Next to your principles, and affections, and health, value your time.*

(f) REMINISCENCES OF THE REV. R. P. GRAVES, M.A.,
FORMERLY OF WINDERMERE, NOW OF DUBLIN.

I REMEMBER Mr. Wordsworth saying that, at a particular stage of his mental progress, he used to be frequently so rapt into an unreal transcendental world of ideas that the external world seemed no longer to exist in relation to him, and he had to reconvince himself of its existence *by clasping a tree*, or something that happened to be near him. I could not help connecting this fact with that obscure passage in his great Ode on the ‘Intimations of Immortality,’ in which he speaks of

‘Those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things;
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a creature,
Moving about in worlds not realised,’ &c.

I heard him once make the remark that it would be a good habit to watch closely the first involuntary thoughts upon waking in the morning, as indications of the real current of the moral being.

I was struck by what seemed to me a beautiful analogy, which I once heard him draw, and which was new to me—that the individual characters of mankind showed themselves distinctively in childhood and youth, as those of trees in Spring;

* *Memoirs*, ii. pp. 467-80.

that of both, of trees in Summer and of human kind in middle life, they were then alike to a great degree merged in a dull uniformity ; and that again, in Autumn and in declining age, there appeared afresh all their original and inherent variety brought out into view with deeper marking of character, with more vivid contrast, and with greater accession of interest and beauty.

He thought the charm of *Robinson Crusoe* mistakenly ascribed, as it commonly is done, to its *naturalness*. Attaching a full value to the singular yet easily imagined and most picturesque circumstances of the adventurer's position, to the admirable painting of the scenes, and to the knowledge displayed of the working of human feelings, he yet felt sure that the intense interest created by the story arose chiefly from the extraordinary energy and resource of the hero under his difficult circumstances, from their being so far beyond what it was natural to expect, or what would have been exhibited by the average of men ; and that similarly the high pleasure derived from his successes and good fortunes arose from the peculiar source of these uncommon merits of his character.

I have heard him pronounce that the Tragedy of *Othello*, Plato's records of the last scenes of the career of Socrates, and Isaac Walton's *Life of George Herbert*, were in his opinion the most pathetic of human compositions.

In a walk one day, after stopping, according to his custom, to claim admiration for some happy aspect of the landscape, or beautiful *composition* on a smaller scale of natural objects, caught by him at the precisely best point of view in the midst of his conversation on other subjects, he added, good-humouredly, that there were three callings for success in which Nature had furnished him with qualifications—the callings of poet, landscape-gardener, and critic of pictures and works of art. On hearing this I could not but remember how his qualifications for the second were proved by the surprising variety of natural beauties he managed to display to their best advantage, from the very circumscribed limits of the garden at Rydal Mount, ‘an invisible hand of art everywhere working’ (to use his own exquisite expression) ‘in the very spirit of Nature,’ and how many there were who have owed the charm of their grounds and gardens to direction sought from his well-known taste and feeling. As to works of art, his criticism was not that of one versed in

the history of the schools, but, always proceeding upon first principles, the ‘prima philosophia,’ as he called it; and it was, as it appeared to me, of the highest order.

He was a very great admirer of *Virgil*, not so much as a creative poet, but as the most consummate master of language, that, perhaps, ever existed. From him, and Horace, who was an especial favourite, and Lucretius, he used to quote much.*

(g) ON THE DEATH OF COLERIDGE.

THE death of Coleridge was announced to us by his friend Wordsworth. It was the Sunday evening after the event occurred that my brother and I walked over to the Mount, where we found the Poet alone. One of the first things we heard from him was the death of one who had been, he said, his friend for more than thirty years. He then continued to speak of him; called him the most *wonderful* man that he had ever known—wonderful for the originality of his mind, and the power he possessed of throwing out in profusion grand central truths from which might be evolved the most comprehensive systems. Wordsworth, as a poet, regretted that German metaphysics had so much captivated the taste of Coleridge, for he was frequently not intelligible on this subject; whereas, if his energy and his originality had been more exerted in the channel of poetry, an instrument of which he had so perfect a mastery, Wordsworth thought he might have done more permanently to enrich the literature, and to influence the thought of the nation, than any man of the age. As it was, however, he said he believed Coleridge’s mind to have been a widely fertilising one, and that the seed he had so lavishly sown in his conversational discourses, and the Sibylline leaves (not the poems so called by him) which he had scattered abroad so extensively covered with his annotations, had done much to form the opinions of the highest-educated men of the day; although this might be an influence not likely to meet with adequate recognition. After mentioning, in answer to our inquiries about the circumstances of their friendship, that though a considerable period had elapsed during which they had not seen much of each other, Coleridge and he had been, for more than

* *Memoirs*, ii. 467-83.

two years, uninterruptedly, in as close intimacy as man could be with man, he proceeded to read to us the letter from Henry Nelson Coleridge which conveyed the tidings of his great relation's death, and of the manner of it. It appeared that his death was a relief from intense pain, which, however, subsided at the interval of a few days before the event; and that shortly after this cessation of agony, he fell into a comatose state. The most interesting part of the letter was the statement, that the last use he made of his faculties was to call his children and other relatives and friends around him, to give them his blessing, and to express his hope to them that the manner of his end might manifest the depth of his trust in his Saviour Christ. As I heard this, I was at once deeply glad at the substance, and deeply affected by Wordsworth's emotion in reading it. When he came to this part his voice at first faltered, and then broke; but soon divine faith that the change was a blest one overcame aught of human grief, and he concluded in an equable though subdued tone. Before I quit this subject, I will tell you what I was interested in hearing from a person of the highest abilities,* whom I had the good fortune of meeting at Rydal Mount. He said that he had visited Coleridge about a month before his death, and had perceived at once his countenance pervaded by a most remarkable serenity. On being congratulated on his appearance, Coleridge replied that he did now, for the first time, begin to hope, from the mitigation of his pains, that his health was undergoing a permanent improvement (alas! he was deceived; yet may we not consider this hopeful feeling, which is, I believe, by no means uncommon, to be under such circumstances a valuable blessing?); but that what he felt most thankful for was the deep, calm peace of mind which he then enjoyed; a peace such as he had never before experienced, or scarcely hoped for. This, he said, seemed now settled upon him; and all things were thus looked at by him through an atmosphere by which all were reconciled and harmonised.†

* Dr. Whewell. G.

† Extract of a letter to a friend, by Rev. R. P. Graves, M.A., formerly of Windermere, now of Dublin: *Memoirs*, pp. 288-90.

(h) FURTHER REMINISCENCES OF WORDSWORTH BY THE SAME, SENT TO THE PRESENT EDITOR.

I REMEMBER to have been very much struck by what appeared to me the wisdom of a plan suggested by Wordsworth, for the revision of the authorised version of the Bible and of the Book of Common Prayer.

With regard to the former, no one, he said, could be more deeply convinced of the inestimable value of its having been made when it was, and being what it is. In his opinion it was made at the happy juncture when our language had attained adequate expansion and flexibility, and when at the same time its idiomatic strength was unimpaired by excess of technical distinctions and conventional refinements; and these circumstances, though of course infinitely subordinate to the spiritual influence of its subject-matter, he considered to be highly important in connection with a volume which naturally became a universally recognised standard of the language; for thus the fresh well of English undefiled was made a perennial blessing to the nation, in no slight degree conducive to the robust and manly thinking and character of its inhabitants. He was satisfied, too, as to its general and most impartial accuracy, and its faithfulness in rendering not only the words but the style, the strength, and the spirit and the character of the original records. He attached too the value one might suppose he would attach to the desirableness of leaving undisturbed the sacred associations which to the feelings of aged Christians belonged to the *ipsissima verba* which had been their support under the trials of life.

And so with regard to the Prayer Book, he reverenced and loved it as the Church's precious heritage of primitive piety, equally admirable for its matter and its style. It may be interesting to add, that in reference to this latter point I have heard him pronounce that many of the collects seemed to him examples of perfection, consisting, according to his impression, of words whose signification filled up without excess or defect the simple and symmetrical contour of some majestic meaning, and whose sound was a harmony of accordant simplicity and grandeur; a combination, he added, such as we enjoy in some of the best passages of Shakespeare.

But notwithstanding that he held these opinions, which will evince that he was not one who would lightly touch either sacred volume, he did not think that plain mistakes in the translation of the Bible, or obsolete words, or renderings commonly misunderstood, should be perpetually handed down in our authorised version of the volume of inspiration, or that similar blemishes in the Prayer Book, which, as being of human composition, would admit of freer though still reverential handling, should be permitted to continue as stumbling-blocks interfering with its acceptableness and usefulness.

The plan which he suggested as meeting the difficulties of the case was the following :

That by proper authority a Committee of Revision of the English Bible should be appointed, whose business should be, retaining the present authorised version as a standard to be departed from as little as possible to settle upon such indubitable corrections of meaning and improvements of expression as they agreed ought to be made, and have these printed *in the margin* of all Bibles published by authority. That, as an essential part of the scheme, this Committee of Revision should be renewed periodically, but not too frequently—he appeared to think that periods of fifty years might serve—at which times it should be competent to the Committee to authorise the transference from the margin into the text of all such alterations as had stood the test of experience and criticism during the previous period, as well as to fix on new marginal readings.

He was of opinion that in the constitution of the Committee care should be taken to appoint not only divines of established reputation for sound theology, and especially for their knowledge in connection with the original languages of the sacred volume, but some one author at least noted for his mastery over the vernacular language.

It will be seen that this plan, while it provides for corrections of errors and substitution of understood for obsolete or mistaken expressions, leaves undisturbed the associations of aged Christians, and prepares the younger generation for receiving the marginal amendments into the text. Wordsworth conceived that fixing the duration of the period of revision was of great consequence, both as obviating all agitation in the way of call for such a process, and as tending in the matter of criti-

cal discussions respecting the sanctioning, cancelling, and proposing of amendments to bring them to something of definitiveness in preparation for each era of revision.

The same process, under certain modifications, he thought applicable to the Book of Common Prayer. In this he deprecated all tampering with doctrine, considering that alterations ought to be confined to changes rendering the services more clearly understood or more conveniently used. It is fair to add, however, that I have heard him express a strong desire that the Athanasian Creed were rid of the so-called damning clauses ; at the same time declaring that no one was ever more profoundly convinced than himself of the truth of the doctrine of the Trinity.

He was in favour of a collection of metrical hymns, more peculiarly Christian in character than the Psalter, being set forth by authority for use in the Church ; and for the choice of such hymns he thought a Committee should be appointed in which the knowledge of divine, of poet, and of laymen trusted for common sense and experience in life should be severally and conjointly engaged. As a practical suggestion of moment in the *composition* of such hymns he advised that composers should not in the four-line stanza do more than make the second and fourth lines rhyme ; leaving the other two unrhymed, he said, would give an important addition of freedom both to the sense and the style.

Windermere, 1850.

R. P. GRAVES.

To the above memorandum I now (Sept. 1874) add two items, of which I retain a distinct remembrance.

(1) He was in favour of the officiating clergyman being allowed to introduce into his reading of the Lessons in church the authorised marginal corrections.

(2) He expressed in very strong terms his opinion that the prefatory portion of the Marriage Service should be altered so as to make it not only less repulsive to modern feelings, but more accordant with the higher aspects of the union to be solemnised.

Passion in Poetry.—One day, speaking of passion as an element of poetry, he referred to his own poems, and said that he thought there was a stronger fire of passion than was elsewhere

to be found among them in the lyrical burst near the conclusion of ‘The Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle :’

‘Armour rusting in his halls,
On the blood of Clifford calls :
“Quell the Scot,” exclaims the Lance—
“Bear me to the heart of France,”
Is the longing of the Shield.’

Chronological Classification of Poems.—Many years ago I expressed to Wordsworth a wish that his poems were printed in the order of their composition, assigning as reasons for the wish the great interest which would attach to observing the progressive development of the poet’s thought, and the interpretative value of the light mutually reflected by poems of the same period. I remember being surprised by the feeling akin to indignation which he manifested at the suggestion. He said that such proceeding would indicate on the part of a poet an amount of egotism, placing interest in himself above interest in the subjects treated by him, which could not belong to a true poet caring for the elements of poetry in their right proportion, and designing to bring to bear upon the minds of his readers the best influences at his command in the way best calculated to make them effectual. I felt that his ground of objection made me revere him the more both as a man and as a poet; yet I retained the opinion that much might be said on the reader’s part in the case of a great poet for such an arrangement of his poems as I had been suggesting, and I welcomed in after-days the concession made by him in consenting to put dates to the poems, while adhering to their classification according to subject or predominant element.

Verbal Criticism.—Wordsworth not only sympathised with the feelings expressed in Southeby’s touching lines upon The Dead, but admired very much the easy flow of the verse and the perfect freedom from strain in the expression by which they are marked. Yet in the first two stanzas he noted three flaws, and suggested changes by which they might have been easily avoided. I have underlined the words he took exception to :

‘My days among the dead are past ;
Around me I behold.

Where'er *these casual eyes* are cast,
The mighty minds of old;
My never-failing friends are they,
With whom I *converse* day by day.

With them I take delight in weal,
And seek relief in woe;
And while I understand and feel
How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedew'd
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.'

In the first stanza, for 'Where'er *these casual eyes* are cast,' which he objected to as not simple and natural, and as scarcely correct, he suggested 'Where'er *a casual look* I cast;' and for '*converse*,' the accent of which he condemned as belonging to the noun and not to the verb, he suggested '*commune*.' In the second stanza he pointed out the improper sequence of tenses in the third and fifth lines, which he corrected by reading in the latter '*My cheeks are oftentimes bedew'd.*' Of the narrative poems of his friend, well executed as he considered them, and of the mainly external action of imagination or fancy in which they deal, I have certainly heard him pronounce a very deprecatory opinion; whether I ever heard him use the hard words attributed to him, 'I would not give five shillings for a ream of them,' I cannot now assert, but if used, they were said in reference to the nobler kind of imaginative power which reveals to man the deep places and sublimer affinities of his own being. But to some others of Southey's verses, as well as to the lines above quoted, and to his prose writings in general, he was wont to give liberal praise; and no one could doubt the sincerity and warmth of his admiration of the intellect and virtues of the man, or the brotherly affection towards him which he not unfrequently expressed.

R. P. GRAVES.

Dublin, 1875.

(i) AN AMERICAN'S REMINISCENCES.

TO PROFESSOR HENRY REED.

Philadelphia, Sept. 1850.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You have asked me to write out as fully as I can an account of my visit to Wordsworth last Summer, of which your letter of introduction was the occasion.. Feeling very grateful to you for the pleasure which that visit gave me, and desiring to make a more minute record of it than either the letter I addressed to you from Keswick, or my journal written at the time contains, I gladly comply with your request.

It was about noon on the 18th of August 1849, that I set out with my friends, from their house near Bowness, to ride to Ambleside. Our route was along the shore of Lake Windermere. It was my first day among the English Lakes, and I enjoyed keenly the loveliness which was spread out before me. My friends congratulated me on the clearness of the atmosphere and the bright skies. Twilight is all-important in bringing out the full beauty of the Lake Region, and in this respect I was very fortunate. I had already been deeply moved by the tranquil beauty of Windermere, for, as I came out of the cottage, formerly Professor Wilson's, where I had passed the night, there it lay in all its grandeur, its clear waters, its green islands, and its girdle of solemn mountains. It was quite dark when I had been conducted to this cottage the night before, so that I saw the Lake for the first time in the light of early morning. The first impression was confirmed by every new prospect as we rode along. The vale seemed a very paradise for its sweet seclusion. I had been told that after Switzerland, I should find little to attract me in this region, but such was not the case. Nothing can be more lovely than these lakes and mountains, the latter thickly wooded, and rising directly from the water's edge. The foliage is of the darkest green, giving to the lake in which it is reflected the same sombre hue. It seemed the fittest dwelling-place for a Poet, amid all this quiet beauty.

It was half-past one when we reached Ambleside, where I left Mr. and Mrs. B., and walked on alone to Rydal Mount. I was full of eager expectations as I thought how soon I should, perhaps, be in the presence of Wordsworth—that after long years

of waiting, of distant reverential admiration and love, I was, as I hoped, to be favoured with a personal interview with the great poet-philosopher, to whom you and I, and so many, many others, feel that we are under the deepest obligation for the good which has come to us from his writings. At two o'clock I was at the wicket gate opening into Wordsworth's grounds. I walked along the gravel pathway, leading through shrubbery to the open space in front of the long two-story cottage, the Poet's dwelling. Your sketch of the house by Inman is a correct one, but it gives no idea of the view *from* it, which is its chief charm. Rydal Mere with its islands, and the mountains beyond it, are all in sight. I had but a hasty enjoyment of this beauty; nor could I notice carefully the flowers which were blooming around. It was evident that the greatest attention had been paid to the grounds, for the flower-beds were tastefully arranged, and the gravel walks were in complete order. One might be well content, I thought, to make his abode at a spot like this.

A boy of about twelve years was occupied at one of the flower-beds, as I passed by; he followed me to the door, and waited my commands. I asked if Mr. Wordsworth was in. . . . He was dining—would I walk into the drawing-room, and wait a short time? . . . I was shown into the drawing-room, or study, I know not which to call it. . . . Here I am, I said to myself, in the great Poet's house. Here his daily life is spent. Here in this room, doubtless, much of his poetry has been written—words of power which are to go down with those of Shakspeare, and Spenser, and Milton, while our English tongue endures. It was a long apartment, the ceiling low, with two windows at one end, looking out on the lawn and shrubbery. Many engravings were on the walls. The famous Madonna of Raphael, known as that of the Dresden Gallery, hung directly over the fire-place. Inman's portrait of the Poet, your gift to Mrs. Wordsworth, being a copy of the one painted for you, had a conspicuous place. The portrait of Bishop White, also your gift (the engraving from Inman's picture), I also noticed.

I could have waited patiently for a long time indulging the thoughts which the place called up. In a few minutes, however, I heard steps in the entry, the door was opened, and Wordsworth came in, it could be no other—a tall figure, a little bent

with age, his hair thin and grey, and his face deeply wrinkled. . . . The expression of his countenance was sad, mournful I might say; he seemed one on whom sorrow pressed heavily. He gave me his hand, and welcomed me cordially, though without smiling. ‘Will you walk out, Sir, and join us at the table?’ said he. ‘I am engaged to dine elsewhere.’ ‘But you can sit with us,’ said he; so, leading the way, he conducted me to the dining-room. At the head of the table sat Mrs. Wordsworth, and their three grandchildren made up the party. . . . It was a humble apartment, not ceiled, the rafters being visible; having a large old-fashioned chimney-place, with a high mantelpiece.

Wordsworth asked after Mr. Ticknor of Boston, who had visited him a few months before, and for whom he expressed much regard. Some other questions led me to speak of the progress we were making in America in the extension of our territory, the settlements on the Pacific, &c.; all this involving the rapid spread of our English tongue. Wordsworth at this looked up, and I noticed a fixing of his eye as if on some remote object. He said that considering this extension of our language, it behoved those who wrote to see to it, that what they put forth was on the side of virtue. This remark, although thrown out at the moment, was made in a serious thoughtful way; and I was much impressed by it. I could not but reflect that to him a deep sense of responsibility had ever been present: to purify and elevate has been the purpose of all his writings. Such may have been at that moment his own inward meditation, and he may have had in mind the coming generations who are to dwell upon his words.

Queen Victoria was mentioned—her visit to Ireland which had just been made—the courage she had shown. ‘That is a virtue,’ said he, ‘which she has to a remarkable degree, which is very much to her credit.’

Inman’s portrait of him I alluded to as being very familiar to me, the copy which hung in the room calling it to mind, which led him to speak of the one painted by Pickersgill for St. John’s College, Cambridge. ‘I was a member of that College,’

he said, ‘and the fellows and students did me the honour to ask me to sit, and allowed me to choose the artist. I wrote to Mr. Rogers on the subject, and he recommended Pickersgill, who came down soon afterwards, and the picture was painted here.’ He believed he had sat twenty-three times. My impression is he was in doubt whether Inman’s or Pickersgill’s portrait was the better one.

He spoke with great animation of the advantage of classical study, Greek especially. ‘Where,’ said he, ‘would one look for a greater orator than Demosthenes; or finer dramatic poetry, next to Shakspeare, than that of Aeschylus and Sophocles, not to speak of Euripides?’ Herodotus he thought ‘the most interesting and instructive book, next to the Bible, which had ever been written.’ Modern discoveries had only tended to confirm the general truth of his narrative. Thucydides he thought less of.

France was our next subject, and one which seemed very near his heart. He had been much in that country at the outbreak of the Revolution, and afterwards during its wildest excesses. At the time of the September massacres he was at Orleans. Addressing Mrs. W. he said, ‘I wonder how I came to stay there so long, and at a period so exciting.’ He had known many of the abbés and other ecclesiastics, and thought highly of them as a class; they were earnest, faithful men: being unmarried, he must say, they were the better able to fulfil their sacred duties; they were married to their flocks. In the towns there seemed, he admitted, very little religion; but in the country there had always been a great deal. ‘I should like to spend another month in France,’ he said, ‘before I close my eyes.’ He seemed to feel deep commiseration for the sorrows of that unhappy country. It was evidently the remembrance of hopes which in his youth he had ardently cherished, and which had been blighted, on which his mind was dwelling. I alluded to Henry the Fifth, to whom many eyes were, I thought, beginning to turn. With him, he remarked, there would be a principle for which men could contend—legitimacy. The advantage of this he stated finely.

There was tenderness, I thought, in the tones of his voice, when speaking with his wife ; and I could not but look with deep interest and admiration on the woman for whom this illustrious man had for so many years cherished feelings of reverential love.

‘ Peace settles where the intellect is meek,’

is a line which you will recall from one of the beautiful poems Wordsworth has addressed to her ; and this seemed peculiarly the temper of her spirit—*peace*, the holy calmness of a heart to whom love had been an ‘unerring light.’ Surely we may pray, my friend, that in the brief season of separation which she has now to pass, she may be strengthened with divine consolation.

I cannot forbear to quote here that beautiful passage, near the end of the great poem, ‘The Prelude,’ as an utterance by the author of tender feelings in his own matchless way. After speaking of his sister in tones of deepest thankfulness, he adds,

‘ Thereafter came
One, whom with thee friendship had early prized ;
She came, no more a phantom to adorn
A moment, but an inmate of the heart ;
And yet a spirit, there for me enshrined,
To penetrate the lofty and the low ;
Even as one essence of pervading light
Shines in the brightness of ten thousand stars,
And the meek worm that feeds her lonely lamp
Couched in the dewy grass.’

I have been led away from my narrative ; but I wished to record the feelings which had arisen within me with regard to this excellent lady ; she who has been, as —— has so happily expressed it in his letter to you, ‘almost like the Poet’s guardian angel for near fifty years.’

I may here mention, that throughout the conversation Wordsworth’s manner was animated, and that he took pleasure in it evidently. His words were very choice : each sentence seemed faultless. No one could have listened to his talk for five minutes, even on ordinary topics, without perceiving that he was a remarkable man. Not that he was brilliant ; but there was sustained vigour, and that mode of expression which denotes habitual thoughtfulness.

When the clock struck four, I thought it time for me to go. Wordsworth told me to say to his friends in America, that he and his wife were well ; that they had had a great grief of late, in the loss of their only daughter, which he supposed they would never get over. This explained, as I have already mentioned, the sadness of his manner. Such strength of the affections in old age we rarely see. And yet the Poet has himself condemned, as you remember, in ‘The Excursion,’ long and persevering grief for objects of our love ‘removed from this unstable world,’ reminding one so sorrowing of

‘that state

Of pure, imperishable blessedness
Which reason promises, and Holy Writ
Ensures to all believers.’

But, as if foreseeing his own case, he has added, with touching power,

‘And if there be whose tender frames have drooped
Even to the dust, apparently through weight
Of anguish unrelieved, and lack of power
An agonising sorrow to transmute;
Deem not that proof is here of hope withheld
When wanted most; a confidence impaired
So pitifully, that having ceased to see
With bodily eyes, they are borne down by love
Of what is lost, and perish through regret.’

The weakness of his bodily frame it was which took away his power of tranquil endurance. Bowed down by the weight of years, he had not strength to sustain this further burden, grief for a much-loved child. His mind, happily, retained its clearness, though his body was decaying.

He walked out into the entry with me, and then asked me to go again into the dining-room, to look at an oak chest or cabinet he had there—a piece of old furniture curiously carved. It bore a Latin inscription, which stated that it was made 300 years ago, for William Wordsworth, who was the son of, &c. &c. giving the ancestors of said William for many generations, and ending, ‘on whose souls may God have mercy.’ This Wordsworth repeated twice, and in an emphatic way, as he read the inscription. It seemed to me that he took comfort in the religious spirit of his ancestors, and that he was also adopting the solemn ejaculation for himself. There was something very impressive in his manner.

I asked to see the cast from Chantrey's bust of him, which he at once showed me; also a crayon sketch by Haydon, which, I understood him to say, West had pronounced the finest crayon he had ever seen. He referred also to another sketch, by Margaret Gillies, I think, which was there.

We then went out together on the lawn, and stood for a while to enjoy the views, and he pulled open the shrubbery or hedge in places, that I might see to better advantage. He accompanied me to the gate, and then said if I had a few minutes longer to spare he would like to show me the waterfall which was close by—the lower fall of Rydal. I gladly assented, and he led the way across the grounds of Lady Fleming, which were opposite to his own, to a small summer-house. The moment we opened the door, the waterfall was before us; the summer-house being so placed as to occupy the exact spot from which it was to be seen; the rocks and shrubbery around closing it in on every side. The effect was magical. The view from the rustic house, the rocky basin into which the water fell, and the deep shade in which the whole was enveloped, made it a lovely scene. Wordsworth seemed to have much pleasure in exhibiting this beautiful retreat; it is described in one of his earlier poems, ‘The Evening Walk.’

As we returned together he walked very slowly, occasionally stopping when he said anything of importance; and again I noticed that looking into remote space of which I have already spoken. His eyes, though not glistening, had yet in them the fire which betokened the greatness of his genius. This no painter could represent, and this it was which gave to his countenance its high intellectual expression.

Hartley Coleridge he spoke of with affection. . . . ‘There is a single line,’ he added, ‘in one of his father’s poems which I consider explains the after-life of the son. He is speaking of his own confinement in London, and then says,

“But thou, my child, shalt wander like a breeze.”

Of Southey he said that he had had the misfortune to outlive his faculties. His mind, he thought, had been weakened by long watching by the sick-bed of his wife, who had lingered for years in a very distressing state.

The last subject he touched on was the international copyright question—the absence of protection in our country to the works of foreign authors. He said, mildly, that he thought it would be better *for us* if some acknowledgment, however small, was made. The fame of his own writings, as far as it was of pecuniary advantage to him, he had long regarded with indifference; happily, he had an income more than sufficient for all his wants. . . . He remarked, he had once seen a volume of his poems published in an American newspaper.

I happened to have in my pocket the small volume of selections, which you made some years ago. I produced it, and asked at the same time if he had ever seen it. He replied he had not. He took it with evident interest, turned to the title-page, which he read, with its motto. He began the preface then, in the same way. But here I must record a trifling incident, which may yet be worth noting. We were standing together in the road, Wordsworth reading aloud, as I have said, when a man accosted us asking charity—a beggar of the better class. Wordsworth, scarcely looking off the book, thrust his hands into his pockets, as if instinctively acknowledging the man's right to beg by this prompt action. He seemed to find nothing, however; and he said, in a sort of soliloquy, 'I have given to four or five, already, to-day,' as if to account for his being then unprovided.

Wordsworth, as he turned over one leaf after another, said, 'But I shall weary you, sir.' 'By no means,' said I; for I could have been content to stand there for hours to hear, as I did, the Poet read from time to time, with fitting emphasis, the choice passages which your preface and biographical sketch contain. Imagine with what delight I listened to the venerable man, and to hear, too, from his own lips, such words as these, your own most true reflection: '*His has been a life devoted to the cultivation of the poet's art for its best and most lasting uses—a self-dedication as complete as the world has ever witnessed.*' Your remark with regard to his having outlived many of his contemporaries among the poets, he read with affecting simplicity; his manner being that of one who looked backward to the past with entire tranquillity, and forward with sure hope. I felt that his honoured life was drawing rapidly to a close, and with him there was evidently the same consciousness.

He made but little comment on your notice of him. Occasionally he would say, as he came to a particular fact, ‘That’s quite correct ;’ or, after reading a quotation from his own works, he would add, ‘That’s from my writings.’ These quotations he read in a way that much impressed me ; it seemed almost as if he was awed by the greatness of his own power, the gifts with which he had been endowed. It was a solemn time to me, this part of my interview ; and to you, my friend, it would have been a crowning happiness to stand, as I did, by his side on that bright summer day, and thus listen to his voice. I thought of his long life ; that he was one who had felt himself from early youth ‘a renovated spirit singled out for holy services’—one who had listened to the teachings of Nature, and communed with his own heart in the seclusion of those beautiful vales, until his thoughts were ready to be uttered for the good of his fellow-men. And there had come back to him offerings of love, and gratitude, and reverent admiration, from a greater multitude than had ever before paid their homage to a living writer ; and these acknowledgments have been for benefits so deep and lasting, that words seem but a poor return. But I will not attempt to describe further the feelings which were strongly present to me at that moment, when I seemed most to realise in whose presence I stood.

He walked with me as far as the main road to Ambleside. As we passed the little chapel built by Lady Fleming, which has been the occasion, as you remember, of one of his poems, there were persons, tourists evidently, talking with the sexton at the door. Their inquiries, I fancied, were about Wordsworth, perhaps as to the hour of service the next day (Sunday), with the hope of seeing him there. One of them caught sight of the venerable man at the moment, and at once seemed to perceive who it was, for she motioned to the others to look, and they watched him with earnest gaze. I was struck with their looks of delighted admiration. He stopped when we reached the main road, saying that his strength would not allow him to walk further. Giving me his hand, he desired again to be remembered to you and others in America, and wished me a safe return to my friends, and so we parted. I went on my way, happy in the recollection of this, to me, memorable interview. My mind was

in a tumult of excitement, for I felt that I had been in the familiar presence of one of the noblest of our race; and this sense of Wordsworth's intellectual greatness had been with me during the whole interview. I may speak, too, of the strong perception of his moral elevation which I had at the same time. No word of unkindness had fallen from him. He seemed to be living as if in the presence of God, by habitual recollection. A strange feeling, almost of awe, had impressed me while I was thus with him.

Believing that his memory will be had in honour in all coming time, I could not but be thankful that I had been admitted to intimate intercourse with him then, when he was so near the end of life. To you, my dear friend, I must again say I owe this happiness, and to you it has been denied. You also, of all others of our countrymen, would have most valued such an interview, for to you the great Poet's heart has been in an especial manner opened in private correspondence. No other American has he honoured in the same degree; and by no one else in this country has the knowledge and appreciation of his poetry been so much extended. The love which has so long animated you has been such, that multitudes have been influenced to seek for joy and refreshment from the same pure source.

I have been led, as I said at the beginning of my letter, to make this record, partly from your suggestion, and partly from a remark of Southey which I have lately seen, to the effect that Wordsworth was one of whom posterity would desire to know all that can be remembered. You will not, I trust, deem the incidents I have set down trivial; or consider any detail too minute, the object of which was only to bring the living man before you. Now that he has gone for ever from our sight in this world, I am led to look back to the interview with a deeper satisfaction; and it may be that this full account of it will have value hereafter. To you it was due that I should make the record; by myself these remembrances will ever be cherished among my choicest possessions.

Believe me, my dear friend, yours faithfully,

ELLIS YARNALL.*

* *Memoirs*, ii. 483-500.

(j) RECOLLECTIONS OF WORDSWORTH.

BY AUBREY DE VERE, Esq.

(Sent to the present Editor, and now first published.)

PART I.

IT was about eight years before his death that I had the happiness of making acquaintance with Wordsworth. During the next four years I saw a good deal of him, chiefly among his own mountains, and, besides many delightful walks with him, I had the great honour of passing some days under his roof. The strongest of my impressions respecting him was that made by the manly simplicity, and lofty rectitude, which characterised him. In one of his later sonnets he writes of himself thus: ‘As a true man who long had served the lyre:’—it was because he was a *true* man that he was a true poet; and it was impossible to know him without being reminded of this. In any case he must have been recognised as a man of original and energetic genius; but it was his strong and truthful moral nature, his intellectual sincerity, the abiding conscientiousness of his imagination, which enabled that genius to do its great work, and bequeath to the England of the future the most solid mass of deep-hearted and authentic poetry which has been the gift to her of any poet since the Elizabethan age. There was in his nature a veracity, which, had it not been combined with an idealising imagination not less remarkable, would to many have appeared prosaic; yet, had he not possessed that characteristic, the products of his imagination would have lacked reality. They might still have enunciated a deep and sound philosophy; but they would have been divested of that human interest which belongs to them in a yet higher degree. All the little incidents of the neighbourhood were to him important.

The veracity and the ideality which are so signally combined in Wordsworth’s poetic descriptions of Nature, made themselves at least as much felt whenever Nature was the theme of his discourse. In his intense reverence for Nature he regarded all poetical delineations of her with an exacting severity; and if the descriptions were not true, and true in a twofold sense, the more skilfully executed they were, the more was his indignation roused by what he deemed a pretence and a deceit. An untrue de-

scription of Nature was to him a profaneness, a heavenly message sophisticated and falsely delivered. He expatiated much to me one day, as we walked among the hills above Grasmere, on the mode in which Nature had been described by one of the most justly popular of England's modern poets—one for whom he preserved a high and affectionate respect. ‘He took pains,’ Wordsworth said; ‘he went out with his pencil and note-book, and jotted down whatever struck him most—a river rippling over the sands, a ruined tower on a rock above it, a promontory, and a mountain ash waving its red berries. He went home, and wove the whole together into a poetical description.’ After a pause, Wordsworth resumed with a flashing eye and impassioned voice, ‘But Nature does not permit an inventory to be made of her charms! He should have left his pencil and note-book at home; fixed his eye, as he walked, with a reverent attention on all that surrounded him, and taken all into a heart that could understand and enjoy. Then, after several days had passed by, he should have interrogated his memory as to the scene. He would have discovered that while much of what he had admired was preserved to him, much was also most wisely obliterated. That which remained—the picture surviving in his mind—would have presented the ideal and essential truth of the scene, and done so, in a large part, by discarding much which, though in itself striking, was not characteristic. In every scene many of the most brilliant details are but accidental. A true eye for Nature does not note them, or at least does not dwell on them.’ On the same occasion he remarked, ‘Scott misquoted in one of his novels my lines on *Yarrow*. He makes me write,

“The swans on sweet St. Mary’s lake
Float double, swans and shadow;”

but I wrote

.. The *swan* on *still* St. Mary’s lake.’

Never could I have written “swans” in the plural. The scene when I saw it, with its still and dim lake, under the dusky hills, was one of utter loneliness: there was *one* swan, and one only, stemming the water, and the pathetic loneliness of the region gave importance to the one companion of that swan, its own white image in the water. It was for that reason that I recorded the Swan and the Shadow. Had there been many swans and many shadows, they would have implied nothing as regards the

character of the scene ; and I should have said nothing about them.' He proceeded to remark that many who could descant with eloquence on Nature cared little for her, and that many more who truly loved her had yet no eye to discern her—which he regarded as a sort of 'spiritual discernment.' He continued, 'Indeed I have hardly ever known any one but myself who had a true eye for Nature, one that thoroughly understood her meanings and her teachings—except' (here he interrupted himself) 'one person. There was a young clergyman, called Frederick Faber,* who resided at Ambleside. He had not only as good an eye for Nature as I have, but even a better one, and sometimes pointed out to me on the mountains effects which, with all my great experience, I had never detected.'

Truth, he used to say—that is, truth in its largest sense, as a thing at once real and ideal, a truth including exact and accurate detail, and yet everywhere subordinating mere detail to the spirit of the whole—this, he affirmed, was the soul and essence not only of descriptive poetry, but of all poetry. He had often, he told me, intended to write an essay on poetry, setting forth this principle, and illustrating it by references to the chief representatives of poetry in its various departments. It was this twofold truth which made Shakspeare the greatest of all poets. 'It was well for Shakspeare,' he remarked, 'that he gave himself to the drama. It was that which forced him to be sufficiently human. His poems would otherwise, from the extraordinarily metaphysical character of his genius, have been too recondite to be understood. His youthful poems, in spite of their unfortunate and unworthy subjects, and his sonnets also, reveal this tendency. Nothing can surpass the greatness of Shakspeare where he is at his greatest ; but it is wrong to speak of him as if even he were perfect. He had serious defects, and not those only proceeding from carelessness. For instance, in his delineations of character he does not assign as large a place to religious sentiment as enters into the constitution of human nature under normal circumstances. If his dramas had more religion in them, they would be truer representations of man, as well as more elevated, and of a more searching interest.' Wordsworth used to warn young poets against writing poetry

* Afterwards Father Faber of the Oratory. His 'Sir Launcelot' abounds in admirable descriptions.

remote from human interest. Dante he admitted to be an exception ; but he considered that Shelley, and almost all others who had endeavoured to out-soar the humanities, had suffered deplorably from the attempt. I once heard him say, ‘I have often been asked for advice by young poets. All the advice I can give may be expressed in two counsels. First, let Nature be your habitual and pleasurable study, human nature and material nature ; secondly, study carefully those first-class poets whose fame is universal, not local, and learn from them : learn from them especially how to observe and how to interpret Nature.’

Those who knew Wordsworth only from his poetry might have supposed that he dwelt ever in a region too serene to admit of human agitations. This was not the fact. There was in his being a region of tumult as well as a higher region of calm, though it was almost wholly in the latter that his poetry lived. It turned aside from mere *personal* excitements ; and for that reason, doubtless, it developed more deeply those special ardours which belong at once to the higher imagination and to the moral being. The passion which was suppressed elsewhere burned in his ‘Sonnets to Liberty,’ and added a deeper sadness to the ‘Yew-trees of Borrowdale.’ But his heart, as well as his imagination, was ardent. When it spoke most powerfully in his poetry it spoke with a stern brevity unusual in that poetry, as in the poem ‘There is a change and I am poor,’ and the still more remarkable one, ‘A slumber did my spirit seal,’ a poem impassioned beyond the comprehension of those who fancy that Wordsworth lacks passion, merely because in him passion is neither declamatory nor, latently, sensual. He was a man of strong affections, strong enough on one sorrowful occasion to withdraw him for a time from poetry.* Referring once to two young children of his who had died about forty years previously, he described the details of their illnesses with an exactness and an impetuosity of troubled excitement, such as might have been expected if the bereavement had taken place but a few weeks before. The lapse of time appeared to have left the sorrow submerged indeed, but still in all its first freshness. Yet I afterwards heard that at the time of the illness, at least in the case of one of the two children, it was impossible to rouse his atten-

* ‘For us the stream of fiction ceased to flow’ (Dedicatory Stanzas to ‘The White Doe of Rylstone’).

tion to the danger. He chanced to be then under the immediate spell of one of those fits of poetic inspiration which descended on him like a cloud. Till the cloud had drifted he could see nothing beyond. Under the level of the calm there was, however, the precinct of the storm. It expressed itself rarely but vehemently, partaking sometimes of the character both of indignation and sorrow. All at once the trouble would pass away, and his countenance bask in its habitual calm, like a cloudless summer sky. His indignation flamed out vehemently when he heard of a base action. ‘I could kick such a man across England with my naked foot,’ I heard him exclaim on such an occasion. The more impassioned part of his nature connected itself especially with his political feelings. He regarded his own intellect as one which united some of the faculties which belong to the statesman with those which belong to the poet; and public affairs interested him not less deeply than poetry. It was as patriot, not poet, that he ventured to claim fellowship with Dante.* He did not accept the term ‘Reformer,’ because it implied an organic change in our institutions, and this he deemed both needless and dangerous; but he used to say that while he was a decided Conservative, he remembered that to preserve our institutions we must be ever improving them. He was, indeed, from first to last, preëminently a patriot, an impassioned as well as a thoughtful one. Yet his political sympathies were not with his own country only, but with the progress of Humanity. Till disenchanted by the excesses and follies of the first French revolution, his hopes and sympathies associated themselves ardently with the new order of things created by it; and I have heard him say that he did not know how any generous-minded *young* man, entering on life at the time of that great up-rising, could have escaped the illusion. To the end his sympathies were ever with the cottage hearth far more than with the palace. If he became a strong supporter of what has been called ‘the hierarchy of society,’ it was chiefly because he believed the principle of ‘equality’ to be fatal to the well-being and the true dignity of the poor. Moreover, in siding politically with the Crown and the coronets, he considered himself to be siding with the weaker party in our democratic days.

* See his Sonnet on the seat of Dante, close to the Duomo at Florence (*Poems of Early and Late Years*).

The absence of love-poetry in Wordsworth's works has often been remarked upon, and indeed brought as a charge against them. He once told me that if he had avoided that form of composition, it was by no means because the theme did not interest him, but because, treated as it commonly has been, it tends rather to disturb and lower the reader's moral and imaginative being than to elevate it. He feared to handle it amiss. He seemed to think that the subject had been so long vulgarised, that few poets had a right to assume that they could treat it worthily, especially as the theme, when treated unworthily, was such an easy and cheap way of winning applause. It has been observed also that the Religion of Wordsworth's poetry, at least of his earlier poetry, is not as distinctly 'Revealed Religion' as might have been expected from this poet's well-known adherence to what he has called emphatically 'The lord, and mighty paramount of Truths.' He once remarked to me himself on this circumstance, and explained it by stating that when in youth his imagination was shaping for itself the channel in which it was to flow, his religious convictions were less definite and less strong than they had become on more mature thought, and that when his poetic mind and manner had once been formed, he feared that he might, in attempting to modify them, have become constrained. He added that on such matters he ever wrote with great diffidence, remembering that if there were many subjects too low for song, there were some too high. Wordsworth's general confidence in his own powers, which was strong, though far from exaggerated, rendered more striking and more touching his humility in all that concerned Religion. It used to remind me of what I once heard Mr. Rogers say, viz. 'There is a special character of *greatness* about humility for it implies that a man can, in an unusual degree, estimate the *greatness* of what is above us.' Fortunately his diffidence did not keep Wordsworth silent on sacred themes; his later poems include an unequivocal as well as beautiful confession of Christian faith; and one of them, 'The Primrose of the Rock,' is as distinctly Wordsworthian in its inspiration as it is Christian in its doctrine. Wordsworth was a 'high churchman,' and also, in his prose mind, strongly anti-Roman Catholic, partly on political grounds; but that it was otherwise as regards his mind poetic is obvious from many passages in his Christian poetry,

especially those which refer to the monastic system, and the Schoolmen, and his sonnet on the Blessed Virgin, whom he addresses as

‘ Our tainted nature’s solitary boast.’

He used to say that the idea of one who was both Virgin and Mother had sunk so deep into the heart of Humanity, that there it must ever remain.

Wordsworth’s estimate of his contemporaries was not generally high. I remember his once saying to me, ‘ I have known many that might be called very *clever* men, and a good many of real and vigorous *abilities*, but few of genius ; and only one whom I should call “wonderful.” That one was Coleridge. At any hour of the day or night he would talk by the hour, if there chanced to be *any* sympathetic listener, and talk better than the best page of his writings ; for a pen half paralysed his genius. A child would sit quietly at his feet and wonder, till the torrent had passed by. The only man like Coleridge whom I have known is Sir William Hamilton, Astronomer Royal of Dublin.’ I remember, however, that when I recited by his fireside Alfred Tennyson’s two political poems, ‘ You ask me why, though ill at ease,’ and ‘ Of old sat Freedom on the heights,’ the old bard listened with a deepening attention, and when I had ended, said after a pause, ‘ I must acknowledge that those two poems are very solid and noble in thought. Their diction also seems singularly stately.’ He was a great admirer of *Philip van Artevelde*. In the case of a certain poet since dead, and never popular, he said to me, ‘ I consider his sonnets to be the best of modern times ;’ adding, ‘ Of course I am not including my own in any comparison with those of others.’ He was not sanguine as to the future of English poetry. He thought that there was much to be supplied in other departments of our literature, and especially he desired a really great History of England ; but he was disposed to regard the roll of English poetry as made up, and as leaving place for little more except what was likely to be eccentric or imitational.

In his younger days Wordsworth had had to fight a great battle in poetry, for both his subjects and his mode of treating them were antagonistic to the maxims then current. It was fortunate for posterity, no doubt, that his long ‘militant estate’

was animated by some mingling of personal ambition with his love of poetry. Speaking in an early sonnet of

‘The poets, who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth, and pure delight, by heavenly lays,’

he concludes,

‘Oh! might my name be numbered among theirs,
Then gladly would I end my mortal days.’

He died at eighty, and general fame did not come to him till about fifteen years before his death. This perhaps might have been fifteen years too soon, if he had set any inordinate value on it. But it was not so. Shelley tells us that ‘Fame is love disguised ;’ and it was intellectual sympathy that Wordsworth had always valued far more than reputation. ‘Give me thy love ; I claim no other fee,’ had been his demand on his reader. When Fame had laid her tardy garland at his feet he found on it no fresher green than his ‘Rydalian laurels’ had always worn. Once he said to me, ‘It is indeed a deep satisfaction to hope and believe that my poetry will be, while it lasts, a help to the cause of virtue and truth—especially among the young. As for myself, it seems now of little moment how long I may be remembered. When a man pushes off in his little boat into the great seas of Infinity and Eternity, it surely signifies little how long he is kept in sight by watchers from the shore.’

Such are my chief recollections of the great poet, whom I knew but in his old age, but whose heart retained its youth till his daughter Dora’s death. He seemed to me one who from boyhood had been faithful to a high vocation ; one who had esteemed it his office to minister, in an age of conventional civilisation, at Nature’s altar, and who had in his later life explained and vindicated such life-long ministration, even while he seemed to apologise for it, in the memorable confession,

‘But who is innocent? By grace divine,
Not otherwise, O Nature, are we thine.’*

It was to Nature as first created, not to Nature as corrupted by ‘disnatured’ passions, that his song had attributed such high and healing powers. In singing her praise he had chosen a theme loftier than most of his readers knew—loftier, as he perhaps eventually discovered, than he had at first supposed it to be. Utterly without Shakspeare’s dramatic faculty, he was richer

* ‘Evening Voluntary.’

and wider in the humanities than any poet since Shakspeare. Wholly unlike Milton in character and in opinions, he abounds in passages to be paralleled only by Milton in solemn and spiritual sublimity, and not even by Milton in pathos. It was plain to those who knew Wordsworth that he had kept his great gift pure, and used it honestly and thoroughly for that purpose for which it had been bestowed. He had ever written with a conscientious reverence for that gift ; but he had also written spontaneously. He had composed with care—not the exaggerated solicitude which is prompted by vanity, and which frets itself to unite incompatible excellences ; but the diligence which shrinks from no toil while eradicating blemishes that confuse a poem's meaning, and frustrate its purpose. He regarded poetry as an art ; but he also regarded Art not as the compeer of Nature, much less her superior, but as her servant and interpreter. He wrote poetry likewise, no doubt, in a large measure, because self-utterance was an essential law of his nature. If he had a companion, he discoursed like one whose thoughts must needs run on in audible current ; if he walked alone among his mountains, he murmured old songs. He was like a pine grove, vocal as well as visible. But to poetry he had dedicated himself as to the utterance of the highest truths brought within the range of his life's experience ; and if his poetry has been accused of egotism, the charge has come from those who did not perceive that it was with a human, not a mere personal interest that he habitually watched the processes of his own mind. He drew from the fountain that was nearest at hand what he hoped might be a refreshment to those far off. He once said, speaking of a departed man of genius, who had lived an unhappy life and deplorably abused his powers, to the lasting calamity of his country, ‘A great poet must be a great man ; and a great man must be a good man ; and a good man ought to be a happy man.’ To know Wordsworth was to feel sure that if he had been a great poet, it was not merely because he had been endowed with a great imagination, but because he had been a good man, a great man, and a man whose poetry had, in an especial sense, been the expression of a healthily happy moral being.

AUBREY DE VERE.

Curragh Chase, March 31, 1875.

P.S. Wordsworth was by no means without humour. When the Queen on one occasion gave a masked ball, some one said that a certain youthful poet, who has since reached a deservedly high place both in the literary and political world, but who was then known chiefly as an accomplished and amusing young man of society, was to attend it dressed in the character of the father of English poetry, grave old Chaucer. ‘What,’ said Wordsworth, ‘M. go as Chaucer! Then it only remains for me to go as M.!’

PART II.

SONNET—RYDAL WITH WORDSWORTH.

BY THE LATE SIR AUBREY DE VERE.

‘What we beheld scarce can I now recall
In one connected picture ; images
Hurrying so swiftly their fresh witcheries
O'er the mind's mirror, that the several
Seems lost, or blended in the mighty all.
Lone lakes ; rills gushing through rock-rooted trees ;
Peaked mountains shadowing vales of peacefulness :
Glens echoing to the flashing waterfall.
Then that sweet twilight isle ! with friends delayed
Beside a ferny bank 'neath oaks and yews ;
The moon between two mountain peaks embayed ;
Heaven and the waters dyed with sunset hues :
And he, the Poet of the age and land,
Discoursing as we wandered hand in hand.’

The above-written sonnet is the record of a delightful day spent by my father in 1833 with Wordsworth at Rydal, to which he went from the still more beautiful shores of Ullswater, where he had been sojourning at Halsteads. He had been one of Wordsworth’s warmest admirers, when their number was small, and in 1842 he dedicated a volume of poems to him.* He taught me when a boy of 18 years old to admire the great bard. I had been very enthusiastically praising Lord Byron’s poetry. My father calmly replied, ‘Wordsworth is the great poet of modern times.’ Much surprised, I asked, ‘And what may his special merits be?’ The answer was, ‘They are very various, as for

* *A Song of Faith, Devout Exercises, and Sonnets* (Pickering). The Dedication closed thus: ‘I may at least hope to be named hereafter among the friends of Wordsworth.’

instance, depth, largeness, elevation, and, what is rare in modern poetry, an *entire* purity. In his noble “Laodamia” they are chiefly majesty and pathos.’ A few weeks afterwards I chanced to take from the library shelves a volume of Wordsworth, and it opened on ‘Laodamia.’ Some strong, calm hand seemed to have been laid on my head, and bound me to the spot, till I had come to the end. As I read, a new world, hitherto unimagined, opened itself out, stretching far away into serene infinitudes. The region was one to me unknown, but the harmony of the picture attested its reality. Above and around were indeed

‘An ampler ether, a diviner air,
And fields invested with purpureal gleams;’

and when I reached the line,

‘Calm pleasures there abide—majestic pains,’

I felt that no tenants less stately could walk in so lordly a precinct. I had been translated into another planet of song—one with larger movements and a longer year. A wider conception of poetry had become mine, and the Byronian enthusiasm fell from me like a bond that is broken by being outgrown. The incident illustrates poetry in one of its many characters, that of ‘the deliverer.’ The ready sympathies and inexperienced imagination of youth make it surrender itself easily despite its better aspirations, or in consequence of them, to a false greatness ; and the true greatness, once revealed, sets it free. As early as 1824 Walter Savage Landor, in his ‘Imaginary Conversation’ between Southey and Porson, had pronounced Wordsworth’s ‘Laodamia’ to be ‘a composition such as Sophocles might have exulted to own, and a part of which might have been heard with shouts of rapture in the regions he describes’—the Elysian Fields.

Wordsworth frequently spoke of death, as if it were the taking of a new degree in the University of Life. ‘I should like,’ he remarked to a young lady, ‘to visit Italy again before I move to another planet.’ He sometimes made a mistake in assuming that others were equally philosophical. We were once breakfasting at the house of Mr. Rogers, when Wordsworth, after gazing attentively round the room with a benignant and complacent expression, turned to our host, and wishing to compliment him, said, ‘Mr. Rogers, I never see this house, so perfect in its taste,

so exquisite in all its arrangements, and decorated with such well-chosen pictures, without fancying it the very house imaged to himself by the Roman poet, when, in illustration of man's mortality, he says, “*Linquenda est domus.*” ‘What is that you are saying?’ replied Mr. Rogers, whose years, between eighty and ninety, had not improved his hearing. ‘I was remarking that your house,’ replied Wordsworth, ‘always reminds me of the Ode (more properly called an Elegy, though doubtless the lyrical measure not unnaturally causes it to be included among Horace's Odes) in which the Roman poet writes “*Linquenda est domus;*” that is, since, ladies being present, a translation may be deemed desirable, *The house is, or has to be, left;* and again, “*et placens uxor*”—and the pleasing wife; though, as we must all regret, that part of the quotation is not applicable on the present occasion.’ The Town Bard, on whom ‘no angle smiled’ more than the end of St. James's-place, did not enter into the views of the Bard of the Mountains. His answer was what children call ‘making a great face,’ and the ejaculation, ‘Don't talk Latin in the society of ladies.’ When I was going away he remarked, ‘What a stimulus the mountain air has on the appetite! I made a sign to Edmund to hand him the cutlets a second time. I was afraid he would stick his fork into that beautiful woman who sat next him.’ Wordsworth never resented a jest at his own expense. Once when we had knocked three times in vain at the door of a London house, I exclaimed, quoting his sonnet written on Westminster-bridge,

‘Dear God, the very houses seem asleep.’

He laughed heartily, then smiled gravely, and lastly recounted the occasion, and described the early morning on which that sonnet was written. He did not recite more than a part of it, to the accompaniment of distant cab and carriage; and I thought that the door was opened too soon.

Wordsworth, despite his dislike to great cities, was attracted occasionally in his later years

‘To the proud margin of the Thames,
And Lambeth's venerable towers,’

where his society was courted by persons of the most different character. But he complained bitterly of the great city. It was next to impossible, he remarked, to tell the truth in it.

‘Yesterday I was at S. House: the Duchess of S., showing me the pictures, observed, “This is the portrait of my brother” (naming him), “and it is considered very like.” To this I assented, partly perhaps in absence of mind, but partly, I think, with an impression that her Grace’s brother was probably a person whose face every one knew, or was expected to know; so that, as I had never met him, my answer was in fact a lie! It is too bad that, when more than seventy years old, I should be brought from the mountains to London in order to tell a lie!’ He made his complaint wherever he went, laying the blame, however, not so much on himself, or on the Duchess, as on the corrupt city; and some of those who learned how the most truthful man in England had thus quickly been subverted by metropolitan snares came to the conclusion that within a few years more no virtue would be left extant in the land. He was likewise maltreated in lesser ways. ‘This morning I was compelled by my engagements to eat three breakfasts—one with an aged and excellent gentleman, who may justly be esteemed an accomplished man of letters, although I cannot honestly concede to him the title of a poet; one at a fashionable party; and one with an old friend whom no pressure would induce me to neglect—although for this, my first breakfast to-day, I was obliged to name the early hour of seven o’clock, as he lives in a remote part of London.’

But it was only among his own mountains that Wordsworth could be understood. He walked among them not so much to admire them as to converse with them. They exchanged thoughts with him, in sunshine or flying shadow, giving him their own and accepting his. Day and night, at all hours, and in all weathers, he would face them. If it rained, he might fling his plaid over him, but would take no admonition. He must have his way. On such occasions, dutiful as he was in higher matters, he remained incurably wayward. In vain one reminded him that a letter needed an answer, or that the storm would soon be over. It was very necessary for him to do what he liked; and one of his dearest friends said to me, with a smile of the most affectionate humour, ‘He wrote his “Ode to Duty,” and then he had done with that matter.’ This very innocent form of lawlessness, corresponding with the classic expression, ‘Indulge genio,’ seemed to belong

to his genius, not less than the sympathetic reverence with which he looked up to the higher and universal laws. Sometimes there was a battle between his reverence for Nature and his reverence for other things. The friend already alluded to was once remarking on his varying expressions of countenance. ‘That rough old face is capable of high and real beauty; I have seen in it an expression quite of heavenly peace and contemplative delight, as the May breeze came over him from the woods while he was slowly walking out of church on a Sunday morning, and when he had half emerged from the shadow.’ A flippant person present inquired, ‘Did you ever chance, Miss F., to observe that heavenly expression on his countenance, as he was walking into church, on a fine May morning?’ A laugh was the reply. The ways of Nature harmonised with his feelings in age as well as in youth. He could understand no estrangement. Gathering a wreath of white thorn on one occasion, he murmured, as he slipped it into the ribbon which bound the golden tresses of his youthful companion,

‘And what if I enwreathed my own?
‘Twere no offence to reason;
The sober hills thus deck their brows
To meet the wintry season.’

(k) FROM ‘RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LAST DAYS OF
SHELLEY AND BYRON.’

BY E. J. TRELAWNY. 1858 (MOXON).

SOME days after this conversation I walked to Lausanne, to breakfast at the hotel with an old friend, Captain Daniel Roberts, of the navy. He was out sketching, but presently came in accompanied by two English ladies, with whom he had made acquaintance whilst drawing, and whom he brought to our hotel. The husband of one of them soon followed. I saw by their utilitarian garb, as well as by the blisters and blotches on their cheeks, lips, and noses, that they were pedestrian tourists, fresh from the snow-covered mountains, the blazing sun and frosty air having acted on their unseasoned skins as boiling water does on the lobster by dyeing his dark coat scarlet. The man was evidently a denizen of the north, his accent harsh, skin

white, of an angular and bony build, and self-confident and dogmatic in his opinions. The precision and quaintness of his language, as well as his eccentric remarks on common things, stimulated my mind. Our icy islanders thaw rapidly when they have drifted into warmer latitudes : broken loose from its anti-social system, mystic castes, coteries, sets, and sects, they lay aside their purse-proud, tuft-hunting, and toadying ways, and are very apt to run risk in the enjoyment of all their senses. Besides, we were compelled to talk in strange company, if not from good breeding, to prove our breed, as the gift of speech is often our principal, if not sole, distinction from the rest of the brute animals.

To return to our breakfast. The travellers, flushed with health, delighted with their excursion, and with appetites earned by bodily and mental activity, were in such high spirits that Roberts and I caught the infection of their mouth ; we talked as loud and fast as if under the exhilarating influence of champagne, instead of such a sedative compound as *café au lait*. I can rescue nothing out of oblivion but a few last words. The stranger expressed his disgust at the introduction of carriages into the mountain districts of Switzerland, and at the old fogies who used them.

‘ As to the arbitrary, pitiless, godless wretches,’ he exclaimed, ‘ who have removed Nature’s landmarks by cutting roads through Alps and Apennines, until all things are reduced to the same dead level, they will be arraigned hereafter with the unjust : they have robbed the best specimens of what men should be of their freeholds in the mountains ; the eagle, the black cock, and the red deer they have tamed or exterminated. The lover of Nature can nowhere find a solitary nook to contemplate her beauties. Yesterday,’ he continued, ‘ at the break of day, I scaled the most rugged height within my reach ; it looked inaccessible ; this pleasant delusion was quickly dispelled ; I was rudely startled out of a deep reverie by the accursed jarring, jingling, and rumbling of a calèche, and harsh voices that drowned the torrent’s fall.’

The stranger, now hearing a commotion in the street, sprang on his feet, looked out of the window, and rang the bell violently.

‘ Waiter,’ he said, ‘ is that our carriage ? Why did you not tell us ? Come, lasses, be stirring ; the freshness of the day is

gone. You may rejoice in not having to walk ; there is a chance of saving the remnants of skin the sun has left on our chins and noses ; to-day we shall be stewed instead of barbecued.'

On their leaving the room to get ready for their journey, my friend Roberts told me the strangers were the poet Wordsworth, his wife and sister.

Who could have divined this ? I could see no trace, in the hard features and weather-stained brow of the outer man, of the divinity within him. In a few minutes the travellers reappeared ; we cordially shook hands, and agreed to meet again at Geneva. Now that I knew that I was talking to one of the veterans of the gentle craft, as there was no time to waste in idle ceremony, I asked him abruptly what he thought of Shelley as a poet.

'Nothing,' he replied as abruptly.

Seeing my surprise, he added, 'A poet who has not produced a good poem before he is twenty-five we may conclude cannot and never will do so.'

'The "Cenci" !' I said eagerly.

'Won't do,' he replied, shaking his head, as he got into the carriage : a rough-coated Scotch terrier followed him.

'This hairy fellow is our flea-trap,' he shouted out as they started off.

When I recovered from the shock of having heard the harsh sentence passed by an elder bard on a younger brother of the Muses, I exclaimed,

'After all, poets are but earth. It is the old story,—envy—Cain and Abel. Professions, sects, and communities in general, right or wrong, hold together, men of the pen excepted ; if one of their guild is worsted in the battle, they do as the rooks do by their inky brothers—fly from him, cawing and screaming ; if they don't fire the shot, they sound the bugle to charge.'

I did not then know that the full-fledged author never reads the writings of his contemporaries, except to cut them up in a review, that being a work of love. In after years, Shelley being dead, Wordsworth confessed this fact ; he was then induced to read some of Shelley's poems, and admitted that Shelley was the greatest master of harmonious verse in our modern literature. (Pp. 4-8.)*

* See our Index, under Shelley. G.

(l) FROM 'LETTERS, EMBRACING HIS LIFE, OF JOHN JAMES TAYLER, B.A., PROFESSOR OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY AND BIBLICAL THEOLOGY, AND PRINCIPAL OF MANCHESTER NEW COLLEGE. LONDON, 1872' (TWO VOL. 8vo).

Spring Cottage, Loughrigg, Ambleside, July 26. 1826.

RYDAL, where we now are, has an air of repose and seclusion which I have rarely seen surpassed ; the first few days we were here we perfectly luxuriated in the purity and sweetness of the air and the delicious stillness of its pastures and woods. It is interesting, too, on another account, as being the residence of the poet Wordsworth : his house is about a quarter of a mile from ours ; and since Osler joined us we have obtained an introduction to him, and he favoured us with his company at tea one evening last week. He is a very interesting man, remarkably simple in his manners, full of enthusiasm and eloquence in conversation, especially on the subject of his favourite art—poetry—which he seems to have studied in a very philosophical spirit, and about which he entertains some peculiar opinions. Spenser, Shakspeare, and Milton are his favourites among the English poets, especially the latter, whom he almost idolises. He expressed one opinion which rather surprised me, and in which I could not concur—that he preferred the 'Samson Agonistes' to 'Comus.' He recited in vindication of his judgment one very fine passage from the former poem, and in a very striking manner ; his voice is deep and pathetic, and thrills with feeling. He is Toryish—at least what would be considered so—in his political principles, though he disclaims all connection with party, and certainly argues with great fairness and temper on controverted topics, such as Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Emancipation. We took a long walk with him the other evening, to the scene of one of his Pastorals in the neighbourhood of Grasmere. He has a good deal of general conversation, and has more the manners of a man of the world than I should have expected from his poems ; but his discourse indicates great simplicity and purity of mind ; indeed, nothing renders his conversation more interesting than the unaffected tone of elevated morality and devotion which pervades it. We have been reading his long poem, the 'Excursion,' since we came here. I particularly recommend it to your notice, barring some few extra-

vagancies into which his peculiar theory has led him: his fourth book, the last, contains specimens both of versification, sentiment, and imagery, scarcely inferior to what you will find in the best passages of Milton. He spoke with great plainness, and yet with candour, of his contemporaries. He admitted the power of Byron in describing the workings of human passion, but denied that he knew anything of the beauties of Nature, or succeeded in describing them with fidelity. This he illustrated by examples. He spoke with deserved severity of Byron's licentiousness and contempt of religious decorum. He told us he thought the greatest of modern geniuses, had he given his powers a proper direction, and one decidedly superior to Byron, was Shelley, a young man, author of 'Queen Mab,' who died lately at Rome. (Vol. i. pp. 72-4.)

Manchester, July 16. 1830.

. . . . Though I am busy, I feel rather melancholy; and I am continually reminded how sad my life would be without the society and affection of those we love, and how terribly awful the dispensation of death must be to those who cannot anticipate a future reunion, and regard it as the utter extinction of all human interests and affections. I am solacing myself with Wordsworth. Do you know, I shall become a thorough convert to him. Much of his poetry is delicious, and I perfectly adore his philosophy. To me he seems the purest, the most elevated, and the most Christian of poets. I delight in his deep and tender piety, and his spirit of exquisite sympathy with whatever is lovely and grand in the breathing universe around us. (Vol. i. p. 86.)

(m) ANECDOTE OF CRABBE.

FROM 'DIARY OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.'

TALKING of Wordsworth, he [W.] told Anne a story, the object of which, as she understood it, was to show that Crabbe had no imagination. Crabbe, Sir George Beaumont, and Wordsworth were sitting together in Murray's room in Albemarle-street. Sir George, after sealing a letter, blew out the candle which had enabled him to do so, and exchanging a look with Wordsworth, began to admire in silence the undulating thread of smoke which slowly arose from the expiring wick, when Crabbe put on the extinguisher. Anne laughed at the instance, and inquired if the taper was wax; and being answered in the

negative, seemed to think that there was no call on Mr. Crabbe to sacrifice his sense of smell to their admiration of beautiful and evanescent forms. In two other men I should have said, ‘Why, it is affectations,’ with Sir Hugh Evans [‘Merry Wives of Windsor,’ act i. scene 1]; but Sir George is the man in the world most void of affectation; and then he is an exquisite painter, and no doubt saw where the *incident* would have succeeded in painting. The error is not in you yourself receiving deep impressions from slight hints, but in supposing that precisely the same sort of impression must arise in the mind of men otherwise of kindred feeling, or that the commonplace folk of the world can derive such inductions at any time or under any circumstances.*

(n) LATER OPINION OF LORD BROUGHAM.

I AM just come from breakfasting with Henry Taylor to meet Wordsworth; the same party as when he had Southey—Mill, Elliot, Charles Villiers. Wordsworth may be bordering on sixty; hard-featured, brown, wrinkled, with prominent teeth and a few scattered gray hairs, but nevertheless not a disagreeable countenance; and very cheerful, merry, courteous, and talkative, much more so than I should have expected from the grave and didactic character of his writings. He held forth on poetry, painting, politics, and metaphysics, and with a great deal of eloquence; he is more conversible and with a greater flow of animal spirits than Southey. He mentioned that he never wrote down as he composed, but composed walking, riding, or in bed, and wrote down after; that Southey always composes at his desk. He talked a great deal of Brougham, whose talents and domestic virtues he greatly admires; that he was very generous and affectionate in his disposition, full of duty and attention to his mother, and had adopted and provided for a whole family of his brother’s children, and treats his wife’s children as if they were his own. He insisted upon taking them both with him to the Drawing-room the other day when he went in state as Chancellor. They remonstrated with him, but in vain.†

* ‘Diary of Sir Walter Scott,’ *Life*, by Lockhart, as before, vol. ix. pp. 62-3.

† *The Greville Memoirs*. A Journal of the Reigns of King George IV. and King William IV. By the late Charles C. F. Greville, Esq., Clerk of the Council to those Sovereigns. Edited by Henry Reeve, Registrar of the Privy Council. 3 vols. 8vo, fourth edition, 1875. Vol. ii. p. 120.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

P. 5. Footnotes: 5^a, 'Intake.' Cf. p. 436 (bottom).

P. 6, l. 6. 'Gives one bright glance,' &c. From 'The Seasons,' l. 175, from the end of 'Summer.' Originally (1727) this line ran, 'Gives one faint glimmer, and then disappears.'

P. 17, l. 2. Shelvocke's 'Voyages :' 'A Voyage round the World, by the Way of the Great South Sea.' 1726, 8vo; 2d edition, 1757.

P. 22, l. 27. Milton, History of England, &c. 'The History of Britain, that Part especially now called England; from the first traditional Beginning, continued to the Norman Conquest. In six Books.' Lond. 1670. (Works by Milton, Prose, iii. pp. 1-301.)

P. 24, l. 28. Hearne's 'Journey,' &c.; viz. Samuel Hearne's 'Journey from the Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean.' 1795, 4to.

P. 31, l. 12. Waterton's 'Wanderings,' &c.; viz. Charles Waterton's 'Wanderings in South America, the North-West of the United States, and the Antilles.' 1825, 4to. Many subsequent editions, being a book that has taken its place beside Walton's 'Angler' and White's 'Selborne.'

P. 32, l. 11. James Montgomery's 'Field Flower.' Nothing gratified this 'sweet Singer' so much as these words of Wordsworth. He used to point them out to visitors if the conversation turned, or was directed, to Wordsworth. The particular poem is a daintily-touched one, found in all the editions of his Poems.

P. 32, l. 33. 'Has not Chaucer noticed it [the small Celandine]?' Certainly not under this name, nor apparently under any other.

P. 33, l. 2. 'Frederica Brun.' More exactly Frederike. She was a minor poetess; imitator of Matthison, whose own poems can hardly be called original. (See Gostwick and Harrison's 'Outlines of German Literature,' p. 355, cxxiii., 7th period, 1770-1830.)

P. 36, ll. 13-15. Quotation from Thomson, 'The Seasons,' 'Summer,' l. 980.

P. 44, l. 17. Quotation from Sir John Beaumont, 'The Battle of Bosworth Field,' l. 100. (Poems in the Fuller Worthies' Library, p. 29.) Accurately it is, 'The earth assists thee with the cry of blood.'

P. 47, ll. 17-19. 'The Triad.' Sara Coleridge thus wrote of this poem: 'Look at "The Triad," written by Mr. Wordsworth four- or five-and-twenty years ago. That poem contains a poetical glorification of Edith Southeby (now W.), of Dora, and of myself. There is *truth* in the sketch of Dora, poetic truth, though such as none but a poet-father would have seen. She was unique in her sweetness and goodness. I mean that her character was most peculiar—a compound of vehemence of feeling and gentleness, sharpness and lovingness, which is not often seen' ('Memoirs and Letters of Sara Coleridge, edited by her Daughter,' 2 vols. 8vo, 3d edition, 1873, p. 68). Later: 'I do confess that I have never been able to rank "The Triad" among Mr. Wordsworth's immortal works of genius. It is just what he came into the poetical world to condemn, and both by practice and theory to supplant. It is to my mind *artificial* and *unreal*. There is no truth in it as a whole, although bits of truth, glazed and magnified, are embodied in it, as in the lines, "Features to old ideal grace allied"—a most unintelligible

allusion to a likeness discovered in dear Dora's contour of countenance to the great Memnon head in the British Museum, with its overflowing lips and width of mouth, which seems to be typical of the ocean. The poem always strikes me as a mongrel,' &c. (p. 352).

P. 56, l. 7. 'Mr. Dupper.' See note in Vol. II. on p. 163, l. 2.

P. 56, l. 27. '179—.' *Sic* in the ms. He died in January 1795.

P. 60, l. 16. 'Mr. Westall;' viz. William Westall's 'View of the Caves near Ingleton, Gosdale Scar, and Malham Cove, in Yorkshire.' 1818, folio.

P. 62, l. 31. 'The itinerant Eidouranian philosopher,' &c. Query—the Walker of the book on the Lakes noticed in Vol. II. on p. 217?

P. 63, l. 6. 'I have reason,' &c. Cf. Letter to Sir W. R. Hamilton, first herein printed, pp. 310-11.

P. 68, l. 24. Dampier's 'Voyages,' &c. ; viz. 'Collection of Voyages.' London, 1729, 4 vols. 8vo.

P. 72, l. 29. 'Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke.' His complete Works in Verse and Prose are given in the Fuller Worthies' Library, 4 vols.

P. 76, l. 14. Spenser. An apparent misrecollection of the 'Fairy Queen,' b. iii. c. viii. st. 32, l. 7, 'Had her from so infamous fact assoyl'd.'

P. 78, l. 6. 'Armstrong;' i.e. Dr. John Armstrong, whose 'Art of Preserving Health,' under an unpromising title, really contains splendid things. His portrait in the 'Castle of Indolence' is his most certain passport to immortality.

P. 80, l. 21. 'The Last Supper of Leonardo da Vinci.' A reproduction of the head of our Blessed Lord, taken from the fresco (photograph), is given in the quarto edition of Southwell's complete Poems in the Fuller Worthies' Library—none the less precious that it pathetically reveals the marks of Time's 'effacing fingers.' No engraving approaches the 'power' of this autotype of the supreme original.

P. 88, l. 32. 'Faber.' Among the treasures (unpublished) of the Wordsworth Correspondence are various remarkable letters of Faber—one, very singular, announcing his going over to the Church of Rome.

P. 90, l. 34. 'Mr. Robinson.' Cf. 'Reminiscences' onward.

P. 97, ll. 9-10, &c. 'Dyer.' Cf. note, Vol. II., on p. 296, l. 35.

P. 97, l. 18. 'Mr. Crowe;' i.e. Rev. William Crowe, Public Orator of Oxford. His poem was originally published in 1786 (4to); reprinted 1804 (12mo).

P. 98, l. 19. 'Armstrong.' See on p. 78, l. 6.

P. 98, l. 20. 'Burns.' Verse-Epistle to William Simpson, st. 13; but for 'nae' read 'na,' and for 'na' read 'no.'

P. 101, l. 9. 'Rev. Joseph Sympson.' This poet, so pleasantly noticed by Wordsworth, appears in none of the usual bibliographical authorities. Curiously enough, his 'Vision of Alfred' was republished in the United States—Philadelphia.

P. 116, ll. 33-34. Quotation, Shakspeare, 'Henry VIII.' iii. 2.

P. 120, l. 22. Quotation from Milton, 'Paradise Lost,' viii. l. 282.

P. 125, l. 4. 'Mr. Hazlitt quoted,' &c. See Index, s.n. for Wordsworth's estimate of Hazlitt; also our Preface.

P. 130, l. 17. Hill at St. Alban's. See 'Eccl. Hist.' s.n.

P. 130, l. 31. 'Germanus.' Bede, 'Eccl. Hist.' b. i. cxvii.

P. 131, l. 10. 'Fuller;' viz. his 'Church History.'

P. 131, l. 16. 'Turner.' The late laborious Sharon Turner, whose 'Histories' are still kept in print (apparently).

P. 131, l. 21. 'Paulinus.' Bede, 'Eccl. Hist.' b. ii. c. xvi.

P. 131, l. 26. 'King Edwin.' Bede, 'Eccl. Hist.' b. ii. c. xiii.

P. 136, l. 28. 'An old and much-valued friend in Oxfordshire,' viz. Rev. Robert Jones, as before.

P. 137, l. 10. 'Dyer's History of Cambridge,' 2 vols. 8vo, 1814.

P. 137, l. 14. 'Burnet,' in his 'History of the Reformation'; many editions.

P. 149, ll. 4-5. Latin verse-quotation, Ovid, 'Metam.' viii. 163, 164.

P. 151, l. 11. 'Charlotte Smith.' It seems a pity that the Poems of this genuine Singer should have gone out of sight.

P. 155, l. 31. 'Russel.' Should be Russell. Some very beautiful Sonnets of his appear in Dyce's well-known collection, and to it doubtless Wordsworth was indebted for his knowledge of Russell. He has cruelly passed out of memory.

P. 165, ll. 7-9. 'Is not the first stanza of Gray's,' &c. Gray himself prefixed these lines from Aeschylus, 'Agam.' 181:

—Ζῆνα—

τὸν φρονεῖν βροτὸν δδώ·
σαντα, τὸν πάθει μάθος
θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν.

He seems to have been rather indebted to Dionysius' Ode to Nemesis, v. Aratus.

P. 182, l. 9. 'Dr. Darwin's *Zoonomia*,' i.e. 'The Laws of Organic Life,' 1794-96, 2 vols. 4to.

P. 182, l. 24. 'Peter Henry Bruce . . . entertaining Memoirs.' Published 1782, 4to.

P. 185, ll. 2-3. Verse-quotation, from Milton, 'Il Pensero,' ll. 109-110.

P. 190, l. 27. 'Light will be thrown,' &c. We have still to deplore that the Letters of Lamb are even at this later day either withheld or sorrowfully mutilated; e.g. among the Wordsworth Correspondence (unpublished) is a whole sheaf of letters in their finest vein from Lamb and his sister. Some of the former are written in black and red ink in alternate lines, and overflow with all his deepest and quaintest characteristics. His sister's are charming. The same might be said of nearly all Wordsworth's greatest contemporaries. Surely these mss. will not much longer be kept in this inexplicable and, I venture to say, scarcely pardonable seclusion?

P. 192, footnote. This deliciously *naïve* note of 'Dora' to her venerated father suggests that it is due similarly to demur—with all respect—to the representation given of Mrs. Hemans (pp. 193-4). Three things it must be permitted me to recall: (a) That the 'brevity's sake' hardly condones the fulness of statement of an imagined ignorance of 'housewifery' on the part of Mrs. Hemans. (b) That a visitor for a few days in a family could scarcely be expected to set about using her needle in home duties. (c) That unquestionable testimony, furnished me by those who knew her intimately, warrant me to state that Wordsworth was mistaken in supposing that Mrs. Hemans 'could as easily have managed the spear of Minerva as her needle.' Her brave and beautiful life, and her single-handed upbringing of her many boys worthily, make one deeply regret that such sweeping generalisation from a narrow and hasty observation should have been indulged in. My profound veneration for Wordsworth does not warrant my suppression of the truth in this matter. Be it remembered, too, that other expressions of Wordsworth largely qualify the present ungracious judgment.

P. 209, l. 8. 'Lord Ashley.' Now the illustrious and honoured Earl of Shaftesbury.

P. 212, l. 17. 'Burnet,' i.e. Thomas Burnet, whose Latin treatise was published in 1681 and 1689; in English, 1684 and 1689. Imaginative genius will be found in this uncritical and unscientific book.

P. 214, l. 12. 'The Hurricane,' &c.; viz. 'The Hurricane; a Theosophical and Western Eclogue,' &c. 1797; reprinted 1798.

P. 216, ll. 4-5. Quotation from Coleridge, from 'Sibylline Leaves,' Inscription for a Fountain on a Heath.

P. 216, l. 29. 'Dr. Bell.' Southey edited the bulky Correspondence of this pioneer of our better education, in 3 vols. 8vo.

P. 233, ll. 34-36. 'They have been treated,' &c. ('Evening Walk,' &c., 1794.)

P. 247, footnote *. De Quincey, in his 'Recollections of the Lakes and the Lake Poets, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey' (Works, vol. ii. pp. 151-6),

gives a very realistic *exposé* of the Lonsdales—abating considerably the glow of Wordsworth's recurring praise and homage.

P. 255, l. 31. 'History of Cleveland.' The book is by the Rev. John Graves, and is entitled 'The History of Cleveland in the North Riding of the County of York.' Carlisle, 1808. Wordsworth is unjust: it is a deserving work, if o' times inevitably dry.

P. 285, l. 1. 'Francis Edgeworth's "Dramatic Fragment."' This was Francis Beaufort Edgeworth, half-brother of Maria Edgeworth.

P. 285, ll. 29-30. 'Spectator.' From No. 46, April 23, 1711, one of Addison's own charming papers in his lighter vein of raillery.

P. 289, ll. 13-16. 'Mr. Page,' viz. Frederick Page, author of (a) 'The Principle of the English Poor Laws illustrated and defended by an Historical View of Indigence in Civil Society.' Bath, 1822. (b) 'Observations on the State of the Indigent Poor in Ireland, and the existing Institutions for their Relief.' London, 1830.

P. 290, ll. 25-27. Verse-quotation, from Milton, 'Paradise Regained,' b. iii. ll. 337-9.

P. 293, l. 1. Letter to Hamilton. The Rev. R. P. Graves, M.A.—Wordsworth's friend—is engaged in preparing a Life of this preëminent mathematician and many-gifted man of genius, than whom there seems to have been no contemporary who so deeply impressed Wordsworth intellectually, or so won his heart. The 'Poems' of Miss Hamilton (1 vol. 1838) sparkle with beauties, often unexpected as the flash of gems. Space can only be found for one slight specimen of her gift in 'Lines written in Miss Dora Wordsworth's Album,' as follows:

'It is not now that I can speak, while still
Thy lakes, thy hills, thyself are in my sight;
I would be quiet—for the thoughts that fill
My spirit's urn are a confused delight;
They must have time to settle to the clear
Untroubled calm of memory, ere they show,
True as the water-depths around thee here,
These images, that then will come and go,
An everlasting joy. Far, far away
As life, extends the shadow of to-day;
And keenlier present from the past will come
Thy sweet laugh's freshness pure, with all the poet's home.
'Rydal Mount, 1830.'

'The Boys' School' is the title of Miss Hamilton's poem referred to by Wordsworth. It occurs in the volume, pp. 126-131. Her brother's was one commencing, 'It haunts me yet.' The 'Mr. Nimmo' of this letter was a civil engineer connected with the Ordnance Survey of Ireland.

P. 299, l. 18; 300, l. 8, &c. 'Countess of Winchelsea.' Sad to say, a collection of this remarkable English gentlewoman's Poems remains still an unfurnished *desideratum*.

P. 306, l. 11. 'The Duchess of Newcastle.' Edward Jenkins, Esq. M.P., has recently collected some of the Poems of this lady and her lord in a pretty little volume, which he entitles, 'The Cavalier and the Lady.'

P. 312, l. 32. 'Eschylus and the eagle.' The reference doubtless is to Aeschylus' 'Prometheus Vinctus,' l. 1042 :

$\Delta\iota\delta\sigma\delta\epsilon\tau\omega$
 $\pi\tau\eta\delta\sigma\kappa\omega\sigma, \delta\alpha\phi\omega\delta\sigma\alpha\iota\epsilon\tau\delta\sigma.$

Compare

'Aischulos' bronze-throat *eagle-bark* at blood
Has somehow spoiled my taste for twitterings.'
Robert Browning, 'Aristophanes' Apology' (1875), p. 94.

P. 321, ll. 32-3. Verse-quotation, from 'Macbeth,' viz. i. 3.

P. 333, l. 2. 'Russell.' Before misspelled 'Russel' (p. 155).

P. 337, ll. 17-18. 'Auld Robin Grey' [=Gray], by Lady Ann Lindsay. 'Lament for the Defeat,' &c., viz. 'The Flowers of the Forest,' by (1) Mrs. Cockburn; 'I've seen the smiling,' &c. (2), Miss Jane Elliot. 'I've heard the lilting,' &c.

P. 342, l. 1. 'Shakspeare.' Quotation from Sonnet lxxiii.

P. 380, ll. 6-7. Horace, Ep. i. 1, 8-9.

P. 382, ll. 27-9. Southey's Letters. Admirably done by his son Cuthbert in many volumes. The seeming over-quantity has been reduced (to the look) by the American reproduction in a single handsome volume.

P. 385, l. 38. For * put †.

P. 394. Heading of Letter 144. 'Of the' has by misadventure slipped in a second time here. Read, 'Of the Heresiarch Church of Rome.'

P. 449, l. 34 onward. Mrs. Wordsworth. My excellent Correspondent the Rev. R. P. Graves, of Dublin, thus writes me of Mrs. Wordsworth: 'I forget whether it has been put on record, as it certainly deserves to be, that Wordsworth habitually referred to his wife for the help of her judgment on his poems. Mrs. Wordsworth did not indeed possess the creative and colouring power of imagination that belonged to his sister as well as to himself; but her simple truthfulness, her strong good sense (which no sophistry could impose upon), and her delicate feeling for propriety, rendered her judgment a test of utmost value with regard to any subjects of which it could take adequate cognisance. And these were confined within no narrow range—the workings of Nature as it lived and moved around her, social equities and charities, religious and moral truth, tried by the heart as well as by the head, and verbal expression, required by her to avoid the regions of the merely abstract and philosophical, and keep to the lower but more poetical ground of idiomatic strength and transparent logic.'

P. 457, l. 18. 'The (almost) contemporary notice of Milton.' A still more significant contemporary notice of Milton than the well-known one of the text occurs in 'The Censure of the Rota upon Mr. Milton's Book entitled The Ready and Easie Way to establish a Free Commonwealth, 1660, by James Harrington,' as comes out at p. 16 ('my Oceana'). As it seems to have escaped the commentators, a short quotation must be given here: 'Though you have scribed your eyes out, your works have never been printed but for the company of Chandlers and Tobacco-Men, who are your Stationers, and the onely men that vend your Labors' (pp. 4-5). 'He [a member of the Rota] said that he himself reprieved the Whole Defence of the People of England for a groat, that was sentenced to vile *Mundungus*, and had suffer'd inevitably (but for him), though it cost you much oyle and the Rump 300*l.* a year,' &c. (*ibid.*). This of the 'Defence'!!!

P. 459, l. 7 onward. Horace, Ode iv. 2, 1; *ibid.* 2, 27.

P. 462, l. 15. 'Walter Scott is not a careful composer,' &c. This recurs in Mr. Aubrey de Vere's 'Recollections' (p. 487 onward). I venture as a Scot to observe that for this one slight misquotation by Scott, on which so large a conclusion is built, the quotations by Wordsworth from others would furnish twenty-fold. He was singularly inexact in quotation, as even these Notes and Illustrations will satisfy in the places—scarcely in a single instance being verbally accurate. 'Sweet' certainly was a perfectly fitting word for the sequestered lake of St. Mary in its serene summer beauty. Moreover, swans are not usually found singly, but in pairs; and a pair surely differed not greatly the symbol of loneliness. The latter remark points to Wordsworth's further objection, as stated to Mr. de Vere (*as supra*).

P. 492, l. 26. 'In the case of a certain poet since dead,' &c. I may record what his own son has not felt free to do, that this was Sir Aubrey de Vere, whose 'Song of Faith, and other Poems,' has not yet gathered its ultimate renown. Wordsworth greatly admired the modest little volume. See one of his Sonnets

on page 495. Nor with the Laureate's poem-play of 'Queen Mary' (Tudor) winning inevitable welcome ought it to be forgotten—as even prominent critics of it are sorrowfully forgetting—that Sir Aubrey de Vere, so long ago as 1847, published his drama of 'Mary Tudor.' I venture to affirm that it takes its place—a lofty one—beside 'Philip van Artevelde,' and that it need fear no comparison with 'Queen Mary.' Early and comparatively modern supreme poetry somehow gets out of sight for long.

P. 497, l. 15. Read 'no angel smiled.' I can only offer the plea of an old Worthy, who said, 'Errata are inevitable, for we are human; and to have none would imply eyes behind as well as before, or the wallet of our errors all in front.' G.

INDEX.

* * As pointed out in the places, the 'Contents' of Vol. III. give the details of topics in the 'Notes and Illustrations of the Poems' and of 'Letters and Extracts of Letters' so minutely, as to obviate their record here; thus lightening the Index. G.

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* This first mention of Alfoxden in the 'Notes and Illustrations of the Poems' leads the Editor to record here the title-page of a truly delightful privately-printed volume, by the Rev. W. L. Nichols, M.A., Woodlands: *The Quantocks and their Associations* (1873), 41 pp., and Appendix, xxii. pp. A photograph of 'Wordsworth's Glen, Alfoxden' (p. 6), is exquisite. G.

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